



NAVY NEWS

Off-sale date: August 1, 2009

JULY 2009
£1.95

PICKING OFF THE PIRATES

**HMS PORTLAND
GETS A GRIP**

ACES HIGH

**THE BIRTH OF
NAVAL AVIATION**

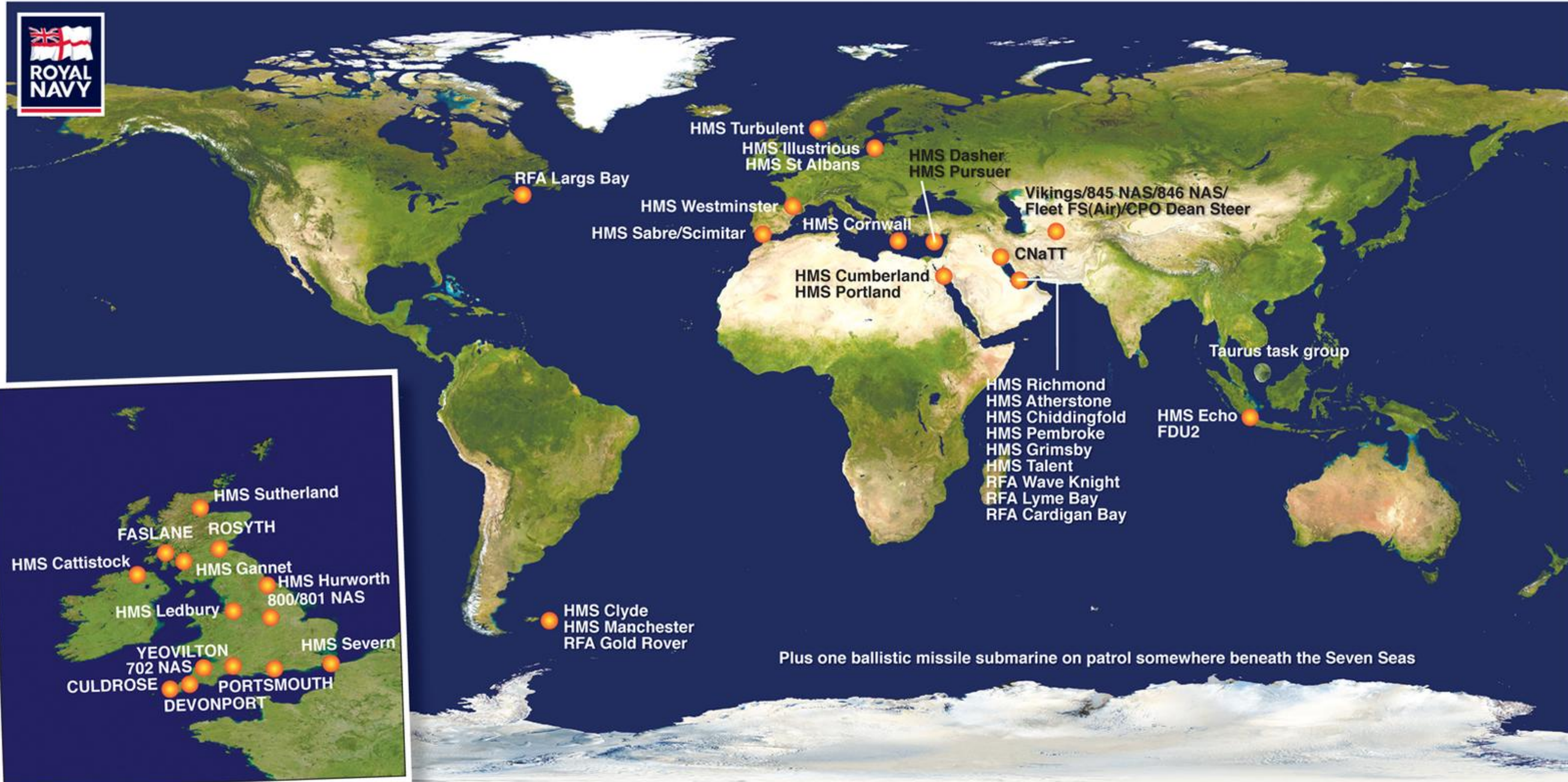


SHORE OF DUTY

BIG ships. Boats. Beaches. Battle. The Royal Navy launches the punch of the Royal Marines into Brunei. See pages 23-25.



GLOBAL REACH



Fleet Focus

GOOD day. Here is the news for vegetables. No Brussels sprouts were involved in operations involving Britain's amphibious flagship in Brunei.

Apologies for the *faux* Monty Python but only one naval story seems to have really hit the headlines this past month.

Anyway, when not eating sprouts (see the opinion piece, page 28), the men and women of the **Taurus task group** – **Bulwark**, **Ocean**, **Somerset**, **Echo**, **RFA Wave Ruler**, **820** and **847 NAS**, **539 ASRM**, **40 Commando** – have been conducting jungle and riverine operations in the sultanate (see pages 23-25).

Before taking part in **Commando Rajah**, **HMS Ocean** led British involvement in **Bersama Shield** off the Malay peninsula (see page 22), and the **Lynx** of **847 NAS** could be found flying over Kuala Lumpur at the end of jungle training (see page 4).

Further west, **HMS Portland** thwarted a potential pirate attack (and blasted a pirate ship out of the water) in one of her final sweeps in the Gulf of Aden (see pages 18-19).

She has handed over anti-piracy duties to **HMS Cumberland** (see page 6), although **HMS Cornwall** has also joined the fight with a NATO task force now committed to the ever-growing operation (see page 8).

In the Baltic, flagship **Illustrious** hosted the **Naval Strike Wing** for air defence war games in Sweden (see opposite), while **HMS St Albans** was reasonably nearby joining international war games **Baltops** (also see opposite).

HMS Iron Duke is off to the Caribbean for six months tackling drug runners and the after-effects of hurricanes (see page 6).

Also departing on lengthy tours of duty are HM Ships **Gloucester** (off to the Falklands to take over from **HMS Manchester** – see pages 5 and 17), **Kent** (off to the northern Gulf to replace **HMS Richmond** – see page 17), and **Enterprise**, bound for Africa on surveying duties (see page 5).

Submarines **HMS Turbulent** and **Talent** have been enjoying breaks from operations, the former in Norway, the latter in the UAE (see page 4), while Britain's oldest active warship **HMS Sceptre** had the newest addition to the RN's arsenal, **HMS Daring**, in her sights during work-up (see right).

Our oldest surface ship, **HMS Exeter**, the last Falklands veteran, bowed out with a decommissioning service after a career spanning three decades (see page 5).

Also in home waters, **HMS Cattistock** paid a rare visit to Northern Ireland (coinciding with the RNA annual conference – see pages 10 and 31), while her sister **Hurworth** could be found on Teesside (see page 10). A few miles down the east coast, **HMS York** called in on Hull as part of a hometown visit (see page 6).

On the other side of the Pennines, HM Ships **Ledbury**, **Charger** and **Biter** negotiated the Manchester Ship Canal for a visit to Salford (see page 6).

HMS Sutherland headed to Scotland for a home county visit, then returned to Devonport to host a rock legend (find out who on page 16).

The **Lynx** of **702 NAS** decamped to north-west Devon for some 'over land' training (see page 16).

Other fliers 'over land' are the RN personnel attached to **39 Sqn RAF** operating **Reaper** drones over Afghanistan (see page 9) and **1419 Flight** flying **Merlins** in Iraq (see page 7).

And you can't get much further from the sea as a sailor than Kabul, where **CPO Dean Steer** offered us a unique insight into training the Afghan National Army (see page 30).

And finally... A 'BZ' to the **RN Photographic Branch** whose images are the mainstay of this paper. Their eye for an image was rewarded with the annual **Peregrine Trophy** awards (see pages 20-21). No sprouts were involved...



● A shell casing falls away as **Daring's** 30mm gun fires during gunnery trials
Picture: BVT

The hunter... ... the hunted

BECALMED seas = good.

Storms = bad.

Unless you're **HMS Daring**.

Britain's newest warship has been on the lookout for the very worst the gods can offer (and let's face it, in Britain that's not too hard) as she tested her ability to operate helicopters.

As the first of the Type 45 fleet, it's **Daring's** job to set the benchmark for her five sisters, laying down the very limits that the ship can operate in.

It was the good fortune of a Merlin crewed by experts from the **Empire Test Pilots' School** at **Boscombe Down** to assist with the 'helicopter operating limits' data.

It's a series of tests which is a precise science – which meant the destroyer hung on the word of the Fleet meteorologists as she sought the right wind, sea state, temperatures and pressure. The ship's company had hoped such a search would take them to the Azores... They got Ireland.

There were also challenging waters off the South Coast as **Daring** conducted replenishment at sea with **RFA Fort George** with fuel and stores (the latter by heavy jackstay) transferred.

That came in the very first week as navigator for Lt Tom Knott. So no pressure... "It felt like a baptism of fire, but actually it

couldn't have gone any better," he said.

"**Daring** handles beautifully and we've great confidence in her – even in such potentially-dangerous situations."

And talking of danger... The gunnery department let rip off **Lulworth** and the **South Coast** ranges. The electro-optics control system was tested against air and ground targets using the 30mm and 4.5in main gun; the accuracy and rate of fire of the latter particularly impressed the Army spotters at **Lulworth**.

After that it was up to **Liverpool** and **Daring's** inaugural port visit.

Four thousand **Liverpudlians** filed up the (quite steep) gangway to tour the ship – the very first members of the general public to enjoy that privilege.

Pretty much the only thing yet to be tested on Britain's most advanced warship is her **Sea Viper** main missile system; more work on that is under way as we speak in **Portsmouth**, where **Daring's** also conducting harbour trials.

The ship is open to the public in her home city this month (18-19) for the **RN Past and Present** event, and for **Navy Days** in **Plymouth** on September 5-6. And in between there's the small matter of **Daring's** commissioning ceremony on July 23.



● **Sceptre** closes in for the kill after capturing **HMS Daring** in her sights

THIS is the newest warship in the Royal Navy inventory in the cross-hairs of the oldest.

HMS Sceptre (commissioned 1978) has eyes on **HMS Daring** (not yet commissioned) as the former conducts **Operation Safety Training** and the latter carries out a series of helicopter trials (see left).

"You can't teach an old dog new tricks, but you can give an old dog something new to play with," said Cdr Steve Waller, **Sceptre's** CO.

Everyone wants to play with the first Type 45 destroyer – and not just her ship's company.

For **Sceptre**, this was a chance to covertly gather intelligence on a new type of 'enemy' warship, first tracking **Daring** from afar, then closing in silently to take some close-range images and collect reams of technical data (**Daring** may be cutting edge, state-of-the-art and all that but she's designed for air defence, not anti-submarine warfare which made the submarine's task easier).

Sceptre is in the throes of a lengthy work-up following ten months of maintenance, work which will carry the boat through to the end of her career

in 2010.

Having successfully completed her sea safety training – the tick in box from the team at the **Flag Officer Sea Training** which says ship and crew are fit for sea – the **FOSTies** took the last of the **Swiftsure-class** fleet submarines to the next level by testing her combat ability.

It's not all fun and games with **Daring** for the ship's company with the **FOSTies** aboard.

Those gremlins of the deep decided to throw in lots of action damage, breakdowns, damage control and other challenges to keep the deeps on their toes.

At first these failures and incidents all occurred individually, but as the crew became more proficient, the **FOSTies** piled on the pressure. At the height of the tests, the 116 submariners were coping with upwards of a dozen man-made crises simultaneously.

And when you're dealing with a 35-year-old warship (**Sceptre** was laid down in 1974) some things do need fixing for real, which meant the odd break from training by popping into **Devonport**. The work-up is now continuing ahead of **Sceptre** deploying later this year.



The loyal Navy

GATHERING speed on the flight deck of the nation's flagship, a Harrier of the Naval Strike Wing heads off to pound Swedish soil at the height of international war games in the Baltic.

Loyal Arrow gave the chance for HMS Illustrious and the jump jets of the RN's bomber force to flex their muscles alongside some 50 fast jets from various Allied nations – both NATO and Partnership for Peace countries.

Seven Harrier GR7s and GR9s from the Rutland-based wing joined Lusty, plus 15 pilots and 140 ground crew, maintainers, intelligence analysts, planners and the like.

They also brought a new weapon with them – Paveway IV, the latest version of a bomb which traces its heritage (III, II and I...) back to the mid-60s.

These days, a bomb isn't just a lumpen object you hurl at a target. But we'll let Lt Cdr Paul Tremelling, in command of A Flight, Naval Strike Wing, explain.

"Paveway IV is a massive increase in capability. With old III you had to aim the bomb and help guide it on to the target with a laser," he added.

"With this it tells you whether it can make it to the target before you release it."

Eight Paveways were expertly aimed by the naval bombers at targets on the Swedish ranges.

The Cottesmore-based fliers also brought some crowdpleasers aboard Lusty – 1,000 pounders.

There are situations where 1,000lb bombs can't be used – either because of the risk of collateral damage or difficulties of aiming.

But there were eight occasions on the ranges when the larger weapons could be dropped to impressive effect.

In all the Strike Wing conducted 51 sorties in what was billed as the biggest air warfare exercise staged in Swedish skies.

In the middle of Loyal Arrow, Sweden's head of state joined Illustrious to witness a Royal Navy carrier in action at sea.

Carl XVI Gustaf, the King of Sweden (and honorary Royal Navy admiral) watched the Harriers depart and return from sorties, and chatted with crews preparing the jets for their missions.

He wasn't the only senior Swedish guest

aboard the carrier; Sten Tolgfors, the country's defence minister, also visited Illustrious to discuss the war games and to watch flying operations.

There was also a chance for Lusty to meet up with old friends – three ex-RN warships now in Estonia service (with a darker livery too): Admiral Cowan (Sandown), Sakala (Inverness), Ugandi (Bridport).

With Loyal Arrow concluded, Illustrious has left the Baltic behind and headed for Oslo, where the Naval Strike Wing Harriers disembarked... and RAF IV Squadron embarked ahead of three weeks' work-up in the North Sea.

Sweden has been the place to go if you wanted to find sea power in the Northern Hemisphere this past month.

Running at the same time as Loyal Arrow was another major international exercise, Baltops 2009.

Around 40 warships from navies in the Baltic – Sweden, Germany, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia – and beyond, including America, the Netherlands, France and the UK, mustered in Karlskrona on the south coast.

Britain's input to Baltops (a fairly obvious contraction of Baltic and Operations) comprised frigate HMS St Albans and minehunter HMS Brocklesby (currently attached to NATO's Mine Countermeasures Group 1).

The exercises have been staged, in various formats, since 1971 and none of the previous 36 Baltops war games had seen St Albans.

At times, the Saint perhaps wished she had not been committed to the 37th exercise – she faced some very rough seas at time, in company with the American tanker USNS John Lenthall.

The minehunters focused their efforts on the 'Wartburg barrier' laid by the Germans between Sweden and Lithuania on the eve of the invasion of Russia in 1941; the force found several mines (plus one vintage British torpedo).

"We were exploding World War 2 ordnance all week," said US Rear Admiral John Christenson, overseeing Baltops.

"Close to 100,000 mines were seeded in the Baltic and the mine countermeasure ships here have done a great job of finding both exercise torpedoes and mines and also real-world mines."

Pictures: PO(Phot) Christine Wood and LA(Phot) Kelly McAlinden, HMS Illustrious and LA(Phot) Pete Smith, FRPU East

Lusty busking in the Baltic, page 27

● Grippen grin... Swedish Grippen jets fly past Illustrious in formation



● HMS St Albans' Lynx lifts off during Baltops and (above) Naval Strike Wing Harriers lined up on Illustrious' flight deck



● Sandown-class minehunters now in Estonian service – ENS Admiral Cowan (Sandown), Sakala (Inverness), Ugandi (Bridport) – lead HMS Illustrious off Tallinn and (above) the carrier's bombheads load a 1,000lb bomb on a Naval Strike Wing Harrier





A privilege to command

THIS is now Britain's second most senior sailor in a month of 'all change' at the top of the Royal Navy.

Admiral Sir Trevor Soar has assumed the duties of Commander-in-Chief Fleet, taking over from Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope who in turn replaces outgoing First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jonathon Band on July 21.

Admiral Soar has divided his career above and below the waves.

He has commanded at every rank from lieutenant to commodore, from submarines Ocelot and Talent to frigate HMS Chatham and carrier HMS Invincible.

As Commander-in-Chief Fleet, he oversees the daily movements of the entire surface and submarine fleets, plus the Royal Marines, and NATO duties with the Standing Response Force and Joint Force Command.

"After a career spanning 34 years, this is an extremely proud moment for me," said Admiral Soar. "It is a great privilege. The Royal Navy continues to exert its power and influence in a fast-changing environment – and has a well-deserved reputation as world-class."

Re-fit for purpose

AFTER devouring in excess of £100,000 every day for 36 weeks – £26m in all – HMS Albion is back at sea.

The assault ship has been out of action since last autumn undergoing the first refit in her career in Devonport Naval Base.

What does £26m buy you? Twelve miles of new cabling, one mile of welding, 25,000 litres of paint, overhauled propellers, shafts and rudders, and new-look mess decks and accommodation – among other upgrades.

It took 450,000 man hours to do all this – and it was all done bang on time.

"Everyone who has been involved with HMS Albion can be proud of their collective achievement," said Lt Shane Doran, project contract manager.

"Bringing the plethora of technical challenges together and sailing on time after 36 weeks in upkeep is a credit to the whole team."

The ship is now undergoing sea trials and will spend the summer working up ahead of OST in the autumn.

She'll resume her duties as the nation's amphibious flagship next year, taking over from her younger sister Bulwark.

Meanwhile, right about now another Devonport-based warship is reaching a refit milestone.

HMS Campbelltown was due to be refloated and emerge from dry dock at the beginning of July.

The Type 22 frigate has been in Rosyth since last September and still has another four months to go before she returns to sea.

The ship's company has been whittled down from its usual 250-plus to a mere 35 in the depths of refit, but numbers are beginning to swell once more now with the end in sight.

The sailors move back aboard towards the end of next month and will bring their ship back to Devonport in time for Christmas.



NOW here's a rare – and stunning – sight.

This is a Lynx of 847 Naval Air Squadron and the magnificent backdrop is the capital of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, partly obscured by the Far East haze.

After exertions in the steppe of Afghanistan, half the Yeovilton-based squadron – three Mk7 battlefield Lynx and 54 personnel – flew east to join the Taurus task group.

The Lynx joined HMS Ocean in Cochin, spent a week regaining their sea legs with day and night landings (for some of the fliers it was their first taste of operating over the ocean), then prepared for the crux of their Far East mission.

847 was dispatched to the Taurus amphibious task group to take part in jungle warfare training – which reached its climax with Commando Rajah in Brunei (see pages 23-25).



The fliers and ground crew, plus C Company 40 Commando – you need some Royals to play with to get the most of manoeuvres such as rapid roping and air gunning – left Ocean behind and decamped to the Malaysian jungle.

There a comprehensive training package was laid on by those nice folks in the Malaysian Army.

The locals offered advice and expertise in day and night flying over the jungle, survival training, and operating in confined environment.

With all these complicated evolutions and exercises under way, one Lynx was on standby throughout the training to provide casualty evacuation cover round-the-clock.

And that Lynx was scrambled when one Royal was bitten on the head. Unfortunately for the snake, it also required evacuating having come off second best in its encounter with the marine...

847 subsequently rejoined Ocean for Exercise Bersama Shield (see page 22).



For those of you whose knowledge of the Kuala Lumpur skyline is a little hazy, here's a little help:

1. Menara Telekom – 1,017ft headquarters of Malaysia's telecommunications firm
2. Menara Kuala Lumpur – 1,381ft communications tower
3. Petronas Twin Towers – 1,482ft office and leisure complex
4. Menara Maybank – 799ft headquarters of Malaysia's largest bank.

In the land of Vikings and camels

BUT obviously not at the same time, that would be surreal...

No we begin in the land of Viking warriors and Norse gods.

Deep from the USA, Germany, Russian and the UK joined their Norwegian counterparts in Bergen for 100th birthday celebrations of the Scandinavian nation's silent service.

All the aforementioned nations have already marked the centennials of their submarine arms – America in 2000, Britain the following year, the Russians in 2004 and Germany in 2006.

The Norwegians arrived on the underwater warfare scene slightly later – but weren't going to let the opportunity for a party pass.

Accepting the invite on behalf of the UK was Trafalgar-class hunter killer HMS Turbulent.

Now she would have been the biggest guest at Haakonsværn naval base, half a dozen miles outside Bergen (the other attendees were diesel boats) but the Americans played their trump card, their newest boat.

At 8,000 tons, attack submarine USS New Hampshire is similar in size to the UK's newest boat, HMS Astute – and 100ft longer than Turbulent.

The Norwegians spent five days celebrating their submarine centennial, using the spectacular harbour as a backdrop for commemorative services, a parade, a concert and a centenary dinner.

The latter was attended by 1,000 guests – submariners past and present, visiting and local dignitaries in an impressive hall adorned with memorabilia, regalia and displays.

Many of Turbulent's crew took part in the traditional swapping of dolphins with their foreign



● No matter how hard they tried, the Talent boys couldn't match the camels' humps

counterparts (and, perhaps, shared the odd 'dit' of life beneath the waves).

Turbs also took to the football pitch, wiping out the Russians from the Kilo-class boat Magnitogorsk 7-0 (thanks to a brace apiece from ETs Lough and Twitty).

"The celebrations were a great success – it was a great honour to welcome the Norwegian Submarine Service to the '100 Club'," said Turbulent's CO Cdr Ryan Ramsey.

"American, German, Russian, British and Norwegian sailors all proved that – regardless of the uniform they wear – there is a special bond between those in the Silent Service."

Right, now to the desert. Picture adventurous training. Canoeing. Abseiling. Mountaineering. Quad-biking.

perhaps, a bit of 4x4 off-roading over sand dunes maybe.

Belly dancing probably doesn't figure. But camping out under the stars in the Gulf desert does.

Twenty-seven submariners headed into the Dibba Mountains outside Fujairah for an adventure training package while HMS Talent underwent a spell of maintenance in the Emirate following her exertions in the Indian Ocean.

The hunter-killer had been supporting the Taurus task group on exercises before breaking away from the amphibious force as it made for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.

While half the men of Talent were at work overhauling the boat, aided by the team from RFA Diligence, the other half decided to see what the UAE had to offer.

For some that meant AT:

canyon walking and abseiling, then a night-time barbecue with belly dancers laid on. The deeps couldn't resist joining in.

"The belly dancing was great but I found it hard to co-ordinate all the muscles in my stomach at once," said CPO Gary Linden.

With muscles perhaps still aching the submariners climbed on to quad bikes, 4x4s and camels to ride the dunes of the UAE desert.

If all that sounds (a) too hot (b) too much like hard work, then there were always the bright lights of Dubai.

A Combined Services Entertainment show was laid on for Talent in the Middle East metropolis – comedians Colin Cole and Rudi Lickwood, the CSE dancers and band Lucas all flew out to the UAE, and their efforts were much appreciated by the deeps.

"It's great that they went to all that effort to put on a show for us," said LET Dave Willis. "It was an amazing show that had me bopping hard to the music."

We rather suspect that there was somewhat less 'bopping', if any, aboard Talent herself when the submarine paid host to His Highness Sheikh Salah bin Mohammed Al Sharqi, the brother of the ruler of Fujairah and head of Commerce, Industry, Banking and Ports.

Following a presentation and tour of Talent he was treated to a demonstration of a simulated attack on a task group in the control room.

With maintenance, AT, official visits and concerts concluded, Talent has now returned to sea, continuing her mission in the Middle East before she returns to the UK later this year.

Mersey dash saves yacht

WHAT can you create using some knives, boathooks, cable ties and insulating tape?

Not a question posed by Scrapheap Challenge, but a conundrum facing a rescue party from fishery patrol ship HMS Mersey called on to save a yacht off the Devon coast.

Mersey was on duty in the south-western Channel when she picked up a call for help from the Coastguard, asking her to sail to the yacht's aid.

The vessel was sailing from Plymouth to Salcombe – and had almost reached its destination when it struck a fishing float, its propeller became tangled with the mooring rope and the yacht swung around helplessly with its stern into the waves and the weather worsening.

Although conditions were marginal, Mersey launched her sea boat – driver AB Ant Crabtree plus rescue team of POET(ME) Jase Carvil and LS 'Mac' McRoberts – who found the husband and wife crew violently seasick and in no state to sail the stricken yacht.

With Mersey too large to tow the yacht into Salcombe, the solution was to call on the town's lifeboat.

But there was the small matter of freeing the yacht first. Which is where the knives, boathooks, cable ties and insulating tape come in.

Jase and Mac used considerable ingenuity to create a makeshift device which cut the mooring rope from the propeller, despite pretty rough conditions.

With that the RNLI boat could cast tow lines across and take the yacht into Salcombe.

Konkan-do attitude

THERE was the rare sight of an Indian task force operating in UK waters at the end of June as the Royal Navy hosted annual war games for the first time.

Typically Exercise Konkan has been staged off the coast for which it is named in western India.

But this year the Anglo-Indian test of maritime forces working together will be run off the southern coast of England.

The Indians dispatched INS Beas and Brahmaputra – two Brahmaputra-class frigates – the destroyer Delhi and the auxiliary Aditya to the Atlantic in a move to show their navy's 'blue water' credentials.

The quartet spent a week in Portsmouth with their sailors visiting establishments, attending training and briefing sessions, sampling the shopping and nightlife experience at Gunwharf Quays, and taking part in the Konkani Cup sporting competition.

The emphasis of the war games was on submarine hunting (the boat in question was HMS Trafalgar), while HM Ships Northumberland and Westminster joined the Indians in trying to find her.

Apart from the submarine warfare strand of the six-day exercise, there were boarding operations – auxiliaries RFA Fort Rosalie and Mounts Bay also participated – and air defence drills conducted. Indian and British divers (the latter from the Southern Diving Group in Devonport) carried out explosive ordnance disposal training.

"Konkan's a valuable opportunity to practise a wide-range of operations in realistic conditions," said Cdre Simon Ancona, in charge of the British input to Konkan (and normally Commander UK Carrier Strike Group, although there were no flat-top participants in this year's exercise).

"This is an essential – and long-standing – relationship as our navies are increasingly working together in the Indian Ocean to tackle problems such as piracy."

Once Konkan was done, the Indians headed to Brest for another spell of anti-submarine training, this time with the French Navy and Exercise Varuna.

An Enterprise of some note

IF YOU'RE hoping to catch sight of an Echo-class survey ship in the next two years, best pick up your passport.

The ship which gives the class its name is a mere one year into a five-year deployment.

Now her younger sister, HMS Enterprise, has joined her on the high seas for the next two years.

Enterprise only returned from a 19-month deployment last spring, went through a fairly substantial overhaul, a spell of OST, a little Joint Warrior (air-land-sea exercises off Scotland) and was ready to head off again.

The 2009-11 deployment takes her to West Africa for a three-month spell of survey and hydrographic work initially.

After that she shifts to the Med, before sailing east of Suez in the final quarter of the year.

"There remains a lot of work to be done in the coastal regions of West Africa," said CO Cdr Adam James, "but this also gives us a prime opportunity to enhance our defence relations in this part of the world."

Although Enterprise is away from Devonport for two years, her ship's company are not. The crew of 75 are rotated, with around 50 on board at any one time, the rest are in the UK either on leave or undergoing training/completing courses.

As for her sister, she's still in the Far East where she's spent 2009 carrying out survey work in waters off Indonesia, Singapore and the Malay peninsula.



● Royal British Legion standard bearers line the grounds of Wincanton Parish Church as personnel from the Commando Helicopter Force attend a service of thanksgiving

Picture: LA(Phot) Billy Bunting, RNAS Yeovilton

Sweet reward for CHF

MARCHING proudly into church with the standard bearers of the Royal British Legion forming a guard of honour, these are the men and women of the Commando Helicopter Force receiving public recognition.

The good folk of Wincanton paid tribute to the dedication and sacrifices of the Jungly fliers and ground crews with a service of remembrance and parade in the small Somerset town.

Wincanton lies just a dozen miles from the CHF's home at RNAS Yeovilton – and thanks to this proximity the town and the fliers have fostered close links.

The town's Royal British Legion branch and the Support our Troops group in Bruton, just up the road from Wincanton, raised money to send treats out to the helicopter crews in Afghanistan, anything from sweets and Christmas parcels to magazine subscriptions and even radios and TVs.

CHF's Sea Kings are currently deployed in support of the British mission in Afghanistan; one half of 847 NAS has just returned from the theatre, while the other half of the Lynx squadron is currently in

Brunei supporting the Taurus 09 task force.

The 847 returnees and other personnel from the force headed to the parish church in Wincanton for that service, led by the Rev Nigel Feaver, chaplain to the town's RBL, and the CHF's 'bish', the Rev Andrew Hillier, himself just back from Afghanistan.

With the act of remembrance over, the sailors paraded through the streets of Wincanton, led by Yeovilton's volunteer band and cheered on by locals.

They paused in the town centre to receive a scroll of appreciation from the mayor, Cllr David Marsh – who in turn received a framed CHF montage – before heading to the memorial hall for an official reception.

"The support of the public is a critical boost to members of the Armed Forces when we're operating far from home, usually in some pretty inhospitable places," said Capt Jon Pentreath, CHF's Commanding Officer.

"The close relationship with Wincanton means a lot to us – it was a great honour to march through the town."

"It really was a day of pride – the guys' hearts are bursting with pride and emotion."

"The clapping from the citizens

of Wincanton really makes us feel wanted and that we're doing a worthwhile job."

■ **JUNGLY** squadrons now have extra firepower for their Afghanistan mission with an upgrade to the Sea King – and an extra crew member.

A door gunner has now joined the original crew of three – two pilots and an aircrewman – to meet the threat of small arms fire from insurgents.

A 7.62 GPMG has been fitted to the veteran helicopters thanks to the engineers on 845 and 846 NAS and the Sea King Project Team.

The additional gun – Junglies have been operating for some time with machine-guns mounted on their rear doors – has been fitted on the port door, right behind the cockpit.

Unlike aircrewmen, who not only man the rear gun but also navigate, assist the pilots with landings and conduct winchings among other duties, the new door gunners perform that sole function in the air.

They have been drawn from CHF ranks, but not from aircrew, and have undergone ground and air gunnery training and an aircrew medical.

Manchester leads islands' ceremony

HER Majesty's Ships Manchester, Clyde and RFA Gold Rover provided the warship-grey backdrop to 27th anniversary commemorations of the landings at San Carlos.

As in 1982, it was a cold and windy winter's day when the three ships, which had previously been conducting maritime security operations in the Atlantic Ocean, sailed into San Carlos Water in convoy and conducted a coordinated anchorage before landing personnel by sea boat and helicopter.

The naval shore party was met by the islands' Governor Alan Huckle, plus numerous military and civilian dignitaries who had travelled from all corners of the Falklands to attend the service of remembrance at Blue Beach Cemetery.

The guns of Manchester echoed down the sound to mark the minute's silence.

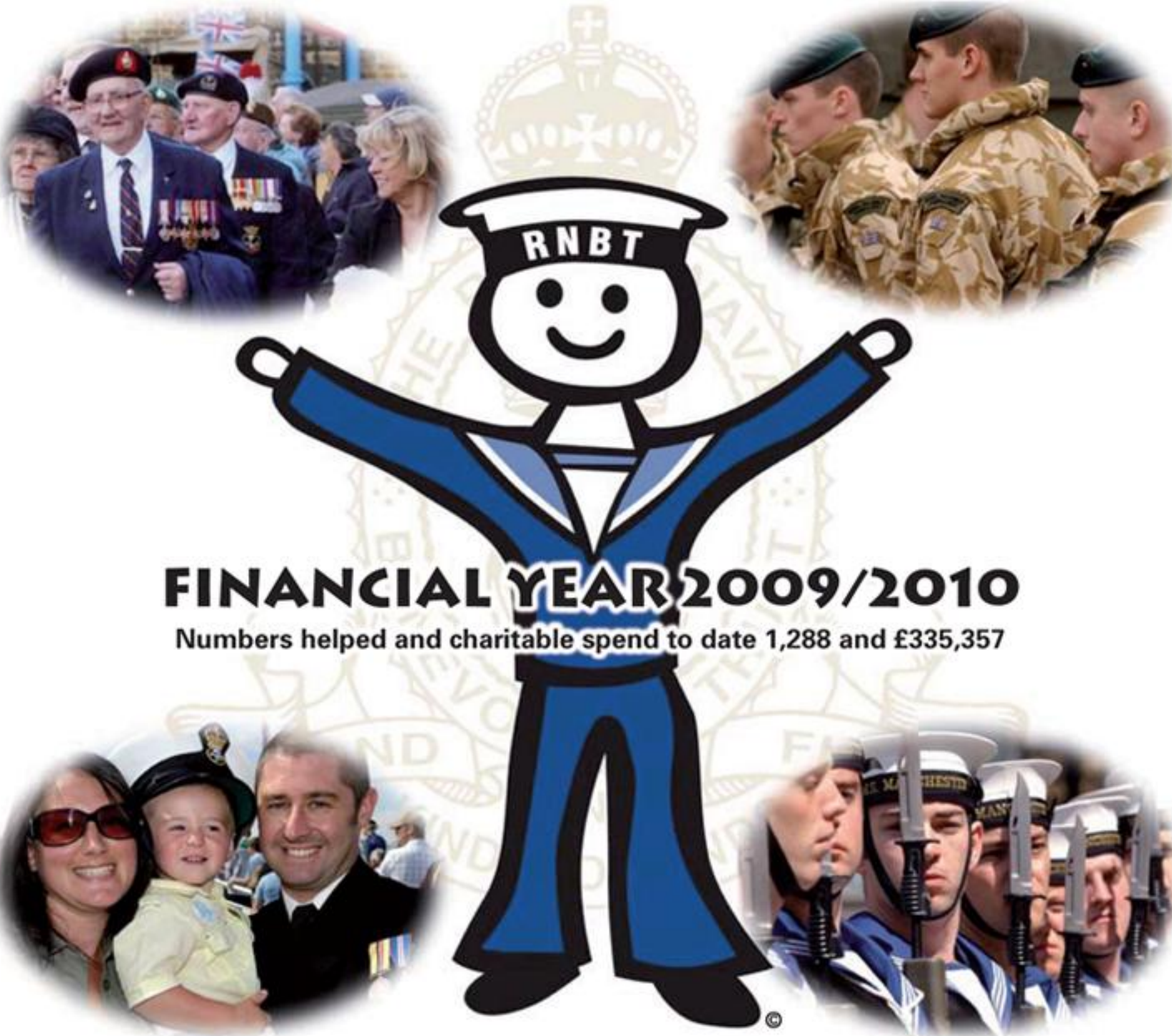
That evening HMS Manchester hosted Mr Huckle for a formal dinner during which the course of the 1982 conflict was recounted by some of HMS Manchester's young officers.

One in particular took the opportunity to pay a personal tribute to his father's best man, who died onboard HMS Ardent.

Gold Rover and Clyde have now returned to duties around the Falklands, while the Type 42 has left the Atlantic behind and is on the homeward leg of her seven-month deployment via the Pacific coast of South America, with exercises and visits along the way, including Valparaiso in Chile.

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Falklands farewell

OF THE great armada of ships sent south to liberate British soil held under a foreign knout, none is on active duties any more.

HMS Exeter, the last warship to take part in the Falklands war, has formally bowed out of service nearly three decades after she joined the Fleet.

Three hundred friends, family, veterans and affiliates were greeted by Falklands weather – cool temperatures, wind, a wall of rain – as the Type 42 was decommissioned in Portsmouth Naval Base on an unseasonal May day.

The destroyer was ordered to break off patrol in the Caribbean and head south in the spring of 1982 to take the place of HMS Sheffield, destroyed by Argentine attack on May 4.

"We always said when we joined Exeter that we were the best, we really were all together – there was a brilliant atmosphere. What a great ship she was," said Falklands veteran Danny Daniel.

His words are borne out by the destroyer's deeds in 1982: she downed four Argentine aircraft with her Sea Dart missiles – two A4 Skyhawk bombers, a Learjet and a Canberra – and evaded an Exocet attack.

The Falklands may be regarded as the ship's finest hour but it was not her only war. She served with distinction again a decade later, protecting Allied warships in the northern Gulf during the first war against Saddam Hussein.

Her final act was a deployment to Scandinavia, Russia and Iceland last summer, during which she paid homage to veterans of the Arctic convoys.

In all her 29 years' service, the destroyer clocked up 892,811 nautical miles – more than 40 times around the globe.

"Although it is always sad to see a ship go out of service, HMS Exeter has given long and loyal service," said her final Commanding Officer Cdr Paul Brown. "I was honoured and privileged to be the last seagoing CO of such a fine warship."

Exeter now joins the MOD disposals list. The last batch of Type 42s paid off – Newcastle, Cardiff and Glasgow – all ended up in the breaker's yard, but there is talk of a possible sale of the Exeter, Southampton and Nottingham (which is still in the process of winding down) to Pakistan.





Farewell, Einstein of the Viking

JUST days before he was due to end his third tour of duty, Royal Marine L/Cpl Robert 'Rob' Richards succumbed to injuries from a Taleban bomb blast.

The Viking crewman (pictured above) was mortally wounded when his armoured vehicle triggered an enemy mine during a patrol with the Welsh Guards near Nad e-Ali in central Helmand.

After first-aid on the scene, he was flown back first to Kandahar, then to the UK. He died of his injuries at Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham five days after the attack.

Known variously by fellow green berets as Rob The Gob, Rob The Body, Rob The Legend, and Einstein of the Viking – which encompassed his keenness for banter, fitness and the Corps, the 24-year-old from Betws-y-Coed in North Wales joined the Corps back in 2002.

After serving as a rifleman, he volunteered for Viking duties in the spring of 2006. Since then he had completed two deployments to Helmand with the Armoured Support Group.

That experience meant he was a constant source of advice and encouragement to fellow Viking crews.

"Rob was the most savvy of all the Viking operators," said Capt Gaz Kears, Queen's Royal Hussars, Officer Commanding 3rd Armoured Support Troop.

"He was certainly the biggest character in the troop – his love of amusing underpants and quick wit ensured there was never a dull moment for anybody."

Sgt Maj Matt Tomlinson said few fellow commandos better knew the theatre of operations or the Viking than Rob Richards.

"Afghanistan was his back yard – you could see how content he was when out on the ground. During the winter he stomped around in his black Wellington boots looking like Rommel," he added.

"There was a humorous side to Rob – especially during PT sessions."

"His fellow marines would dig out blind to look like an extra from *Top Gun*."

"Rob would be comfortable in a large pair of shell suit-type shorts and T-shirt."

"Time for rest now, Rob. You've more than done your duty."

■ The late marine's 100-plus Armoured Support Group comrades returned to their base at RNAS Yeovilton in mid-June at the end of their six-month tour of duty with praise ringing in their ears from Allied troops.

The green berets, said Maj Richard Hopkins, in charge of the Armoured Support Group, had rightly earned a "formidable reputation" for their actions in Afghanistan and demonstrated "everything that epitomised the best of the British Armed Forces".

He continued: "We have paid a high price for the contribution we have made to the people of Afghanistan, losing two exceptional men [Mne Jason Mackie was killed by a bomb blast in May].

"Their spirit will live on for many years in our unit ethos. They will never be forgotten for their contribution to our lives and our unit."



CHURNING up the waters between Mode Wheel Locks and the Millennium Bridge, this is HMS Charger – one part of a three-ship 'fleet' dispatched to the heart of Manchester – approaching her destination.

The Liverpool University Royal Naval Unit boat and her Mancunian sister Biter accompanied minehunter HMS Ledbury up the Manchester Ship Canal for a flag-flying visit to the north-western metropolis.

Our picture was supplied by a former Ledbury man, ex LWEM(O) Steve Howard, who served with the ship in build

and later when she was based in Rosyth.

He's now employed by Bovis Lendlease, whose cranes are in action at Salford Quays building the BBC's new canalside headquarters, Media City.

His former ship carried various Mancunian and Liverpool dignitaries on the journey: the respective lord

lieutenants of the two cities, the mayors of Salford and Manchester, and the Rector of Liverpool.

Once a thriving docklands, then a derelict wasteland, Salford Quays are once again buzzing; today the area is home to tower blocks, museums (the steely

grey structure behind Charger in our picture is the Imperial War Museum North), shopping centres and entertainment complexes.

It was alongside the latter that the triumvirate berthed for their weekend visit.

There were yet more dignitaries to entertain upon arrival as

Ledbury hosted a cocktail party in company with Manchester URNU – somehow 150 guests were accommodated on a warship with fewer than four dozen crew.

The bigwigs weren't the only visitors as the ship threw open her gangway to the public for the Sunday of their visit.

With the weekend over, Charger and Biter returned to their base in Liverpool, while Ledbury continued southwards, first to Devonport then to Weymouth where she was alongside for the resort's Quayside Music Festival.



'Not just any ship – the finest in the Fleet...'

LAST month she was the fastest Type 42 (and probably still is), this month HMS York was the loudest as she let rip with Sea Dart during trials in the Outer Hebrides ranges.

The launch of the destroyer's primary weapon (circa £500,000 apiece...) against target drones was the latest step in the regeneration of the White Rose warship following a substantial refit.

And talking of white roses... From north-west Scotland the ship headed to the city for which she is named and for two important acts in the latest stage of the destroyer's proud life.

Given her size, York cannot navigate the Ouse; the closest she can realistically get is Kingston-upon-Hull on the Humber 40 miles away. And it was there, surrounded by affiliates, family and supporters, that the destroyer was rededicated.

The inclement weather ensured the ceremony was conducted in the less-than-spacious hangar. Youngest crewman AB(CIS) Benn Sievwright and Leonie Staley, the wife of CO Cdr Simon Staley, cut the rededication cake, while the Worshipful

Company of Farmers presented the 'father' of the ship's company, Executive Warrant Officer WO1 David Smith, with a sterling silver jug, reward for his outstanding contribution to leadership on board.

With the ceremony done, the rededication party decamped up the A1079 to join the rest of the ship's company who were already enjoying the hospitality of Yorkshire's county town (legend has it there's a different pub in the city for every day of the year...).

It wasn't merely the locals who were kind to the sailors there; so too were the gods. The weather cleared up as the ship's company formed up for a freedom parade around the streets of the historic walled city.

The sailors were guided through York by the Royal Signals (Northern) Band of the Territorial Army and Lord Mayor Cllr David Gemmell took the salute from Lt Sean Trevethan, Officer of the Guard.

The marchers were accompanied by rapturous applause as they pounded the streets in

full ceremonial fashion – drums beating, bayonets fixed, swords drawn, Colours flying.

"This was our opportunity to determine the legacy of HMS York and it is beholden on all of us to ensure that legacy is worthy of the name HMS York," Cdr Staley declared as the parade ended on the square in front of the famous Minster.

"We want to ensure the people of Yorkshire are rightly proud of us."

"It is a very proud moment to represent Her Majesty as the commanding officer not just of any ship, but the finest in the Fleet, and I am also proud to present a ship's company who are loyal, professional, selfless and hard-working."

After a blessing by the Chaplain of the Fleet, the Ven John Green, and Padre Ralph Barber, Chaplain to the Portsmouth Flotilla, the sailors dispersed – possibly to one of those hostels.

After a spot of maintenance, summer leave and Operational Sea Training, the destroyer will sail south before the year's end to take over from her sister Gloucester in the Falklands (see page 8).



Déjà vu for the Duck

IN THE summer of 2008, Her Majesty's Ship Iron Duke left the shores of the Solent behind to chase drug runners and help Caribbean islands stricken by natural disasters.

And in the summer of 2009, Her Majesty's Ship Iron Duke left the shores of the Solent behind to chase drug runners and help Caribbean islands stricken by natural disasters...

Yes it's a case of same ship, different year as the Portsmouth-based frigate spends the next six months as the RN's Atlantic Patrol Ship (North).

And if the 2009 deployment is like the 2008 one, it should prove eventful.

The Iron Duck was praised for her work in the Turks and Caicos and Cayman Islands in the wake of Hurricanes Ike and Gustav. She bagged cocaine worth £45m and also hosted Prince William as part of his 'get to know the Armed Forces' tour.

Since returning from the Atlantic deployment, the Type 23's undergone some maintenance before a four-week training package was laid on for the ship's company to prepare them for the return to the Caribbean.

... and for the Sausage

SIX months after raising the anti-piracy banner, HMS Cumberland is back tightening the vice in the lawless waters off Somalia.

The Type 22 frigate has relieved her Devonport 'base mate' HMS Portland as Britain's commitment to the international maritime effort to stop piracy around the Gulf of Aden/Horn of Africa.

On her last patrol of these waters, the Mighty Sausage intercepted four groups of pirates and seized their weapons and assorted paraphernalia.

Since returning to the West Country, the frigate has undergone an overhaul, including the addition of new Pacific 24 sea boats. Once revamped, the ship was put through her paces for this summer's and autumn's mission with six weeks of intensive training.

And so, says her Commanding Officer Capt David Dutton, Cumberland and her men and women are "well-prepared – ready to face the challenges ahead."

After a short stop in Malta – surprisingly only the fourth in her 20-year career – she received the anti-piracy 'baton' from Portland in the Red Sea (see pages 18-19).

Glasgow sign Defender

WITH all of the class being constructed on the Clyde, it is only fitting that one should be affiliated with the great city of their birth.

And so it is that HMS Defender will be bound with the people of Glasgow for the duration of her career.

The ship has been formally affiliated with the Scottish city – even before she takes to the water; the penultimate Type 45 destroyer, Defender's due to be launched at Govan in October.

All six Type 45 destroyers have been or are being constructed on the Clyde, either at BAE Systems' Govan or Scotstoun yards (although their bows and main masts have been built in Portsmouth by VT).

Glasgow enjoyed a long-standing affiliation with her namesake Type 42 destroyer, which paid off four years ago, and remains tied with frigate HMS Argyll.

Keepin' Merlin whirlin' to the end

THERE seems to be a recurring theme this month.

The aircraft isn't ours, but the guys at the controls are.

The RAF can't do without some matelots and marines to run their drones over Afghanistan (see page 9).

And nor could they do without our WAFUs on Merlins in Iraq either.

We touched briefly upon the work of 1419 Flight (that's their bird of prey crest pictured) back in our February edition.

Well, with the main British presence in Iraq coming to an end, it's time to praise the efforts of the small bunch of dark blues amid a sea of light blue, khaki and sand.

The RAF operate the Mk3 version of the Merlin – fundamentally the same aircraft as the RN's Mk1, except that all the submarine hunting wizardry in the back of the cab is replaced by space for up to 22 troops in full kit.

To meet the ever-increasing demand for air power east of Suez, Whitehall snapped up half a dozen Merlins no longer wanted by the Danes.

More Merlins meant more aircrew – hence the call for personnel from the Fleet Air Arm to plug the air and ground crew gap.

After conversion training at RAF Benson – which is to the Air Force Merlin squadrons what Culdrose is to the RN's – the grey Merlin crews became green Merlin crews... and found themselves in Basra.

Talk about a baptism of fire...

"Within two weeks of joining the squadron I was lying on the floor in full body armour with 17 rockets landing in the compound – just 20 minutes after getting off the plane in Basra," said PO Billy Barnham.

"I thought: Well at least I'm not in Culdrose."

AET 'Gouldy' Gould added: "Dodging 200-plus rockets in two months definitely makes the time pass quickly out in Iraq but it's all character-building stuff – so I've been told!"

"On the plus side the scrum was champion."

Rather than form a separate RN flight, the Fleet Air Arm team in Basra have merged with their RAF counterparts – giving both a glimpse of life on the other side of the hill.

"It gave us a lot of responsibility – and was a very steep and challenging learning curve," said PO Barnham.

His boss, acting WO1 Nikk Lovelock-Jeffels – an ex REME man turned RN Merlin engineer

turned head of 1419's engineering detachment – added:

"It's been a truly Tri-Service experience – the kind of challenge that I relish, leading an RAF detachment, supporting Army operations, under daily indirect fire. It's been an honour and privilege."

The Merlins have served as workhorses in Basra – acting as flying buses for troops, flying ambulances for the wounded, flying transporters carrying supplies.

"The flying has been demanding with long days spent in the aircraft," said airman Lt Sean Carnew.

"Of all the tasking assigned it is the Immediate Reaction Team role – Medevac – which is most demanding and rewarding with many of the landing sites in Basra being quite small and very exposed to possible insurgent attacks."

"All in all I've learned a lot during my time with the RAF, skills and lessons which I am looking forward to taking back to the grey Merlin world."

There has, of course, been a fair bit of banter between the Crabs and WAFUs.

"If someone had told me two years ago that the RAF operated and maintained aircraft within the line of indirect fire, I would have told them to pull the other one!" said PO Steve Stopforth.

But he added: "Having completed my third tour – most of it on my belt buckle taking cover – I now have a great respect for our light blue cousins and a medal that I am truly proud to have received."

The Senior Naval Officer, Lt Cdr Charlie Parrock, praised all when he said: "I have been immensely proud of what the RN personnel have achieved."

"Such is the innovative and determined nature of the Fleet Air Arm that on arrival we almost completely took over what was a struggling main engineering cell, and were integral in turning it around into its current success."

"The Air Force is the first to agree that without the dedication, leadership and grit of our invaluable team, the operational output of the Merlin force would not have been possible."

1419 are still operating in Iraqi skies; they're flying from Kuwait in support of the British draw-down.

● A Merlin of 1419 flight throws up a wall of sand as it sets down in the desert near Basra
Picture: Cpl Martin Coleman, RAF



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Putting the welfare in warfare

TWO of the Navy's biggest training bases have received glowing reports from education chiefs for caring for their men and women.

Both HMS Raleigh – home to all basic entry training for ratings, as well as the logistics and submarine schools – and the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines in Lympstone impressed the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

Ofsted inspectors visited a dozen military training establishments in the past 12 months across all three Services, with the two RN establishments coming out top.

The inspectors turned up with less than 24 hours' warning and spent between two and four days at establishments observing and interviewing, before compiling the report *The quality of welfare and duty of care for recruits and trainees in the Armed Forces*.

At Lympstone, they found 769 recruits undergoing training on the week of inspection.

Ofsted says CTCRM strikes a good balance between the needs of demanding military training and the needs of the trainees, with "very effective" staff on hand at the Devon base to deal with welfare issues.

What particularly impressed the Ofsted team was Lympstone's efforts to listen to trainees and to monitor training so it could be continually refined and improved.

Overall, it gave the base a 'good' assessment across the board.

HMS Raleigh is also considered "very effective" at meeting the welfare needs of the 2,800 recruits passing through the Torpoint establishment annually. It is also deemed to offer "good support" to those trainees who require help with their learning.

The Ofsted inspectors did raise a handful of issues, notably that some recruits arrived at Raleigh having been provided with misleading information by careers offices, and some of the classroom instruction was "dull".

The report does say there is a shortage of PTIs at Raleigh and phase two trainees (submariners, seaman specialists and chefs, stewards and logisticians) do not have enough access to structured physical training sessions.

But the inspectors were impressed with the entire Raleigh staff for working effectively as a team.

Across the entire defence training network, Ofsted were particularly unhappy with the Pay As You Dine system for phase two trainees. The report says as a result of PAYD, "the quality of food has fallen and portion size has reduced" with some trainees buying double portions to compensate.

■ We'll have a feature on the new-look basic training package at Raleigh in next month's paper.



● One of Cornwall's flight deck team enjoys a Mediterranean sunset

Pictures: LA(Phots) Simmo Simpson and Matt Ellison, FRPU East

Rattler and sun

IT'S not unusual to find two of Her Majesty's Type 22 frigates in the same port at the same time.

It's just that normally, you don't have to travel 3,000 miles from the UK to find them.

Usually in the familiar surroundings of Devonport, HM Ships Cornwall and Cumberland berthed next to each other in Soudha Bay, Crete.

The Mighty Sausage is about to chase pirates in the Gulf of Aden (see page 6)...

... which is precisely what the Fighting 99 is also about to do (much to the surprise of her ship's company).

We last caught up with Cornwall pummelling the ranges of Cape Wrath with her 4.5in main gun.

Since then, warmer climes

have prevailed for the Fighting 99, attached to NATO's Standing Maritime Group 2.

The Mediterranean is the force's traditional stomping ground, but before entering the Middle Sea, the international force put into Lisbon – and enjoyed their first proper taste of sun of the deployment.

Cornwall acted as the official hosting ship on behalf of the task force's Italian commander, Admiral Giovanni Gumier.

That meant hosting a formal reception for local dignitaries and embassy officials, ending with a ceremonial guard conducting Sunset.

There was a lot of sporting fixtures played against local sides and teams from the other NATO ships, including a good result by Cornwall's footballers against the Italian 11 from ITS Durand De La Penne.

Many of the ship's company were also able to take advantage of the hot weather and sunshine and make it up the coast to the beaches and see the sights around the old town of Lisbon.

Next stop after Portugal should have been Split in Croatia...

... but it was actually Soudha Bay thanks to a programme change.

It's been determined that the task group will not prowl the Med, but instead sail for the Horn of Africa and join the concerted effort against piracy.

So the passage between Lisbon and Crete was devoted to practising boarding operations using Cornwall's sea boats and her Lynx, Rattler.

When Rattler wasn't in use, the flight deck was used for far more important things, such as bucketball (sort of basketball but with a bucket).

"It's supposed to be a non-contact sport like basketball. Instead of a hoop at either end, one of the members of each team holds a bucket to catch the ball," explained Lt Cdr Alex Kendrick, Cornwall's weapon engineer officer.

"The number of scraped knees evident the following day indicated the 'no contact' rules may have been bent on a few occasions..."

As ship buffs will no doubt know, the quartet of Batch 3 Type 22s have a command function – namely the ability to direct the operations of a task group.

It's not used too often, but it's coming in handy now.

The Italians' 12 months in charge of the NATO force ends right about the time you're reading this.

And taking over from them is a British staff, led by former HMS Illustrious CO Cdre Steve Chick.

The RN's assumption of command was brought forward a few weeks so the international force could be coordinated in preparation for its new mission east of Suez.



● Cornwall's 815 NAS Lynx – callsign Rattler – practises winning drills from the flight deck



● Cornwall's sea boat races away from the frigate during a series of checks in the Med



● HMS Cumberland leaves Soudha Bay after meeting up with Cornwall

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Pictures: US Air Force



Fear the Reaper

LOOKS threatening, doesn't it?

And this is the Predator MQ-9 – better known as the Reaper – without most of its payload on the tarmac of Creech Air Force Base outside Las Vegas.

Now what is an American aircraft at an American Air Force Base doing in the pages of *Navy News*?

Well, let us explain.

It is from here that sailors, Royal Marines and Fleet Air Arm pilots and ground crew wage the air battle over Afghanistan.

Never once do they leave the confines of the Nevada base.

But 7,700 miles away the robot aircraft they control unleash missiles and bombs at Taliban targets.

We've featured the efforts made by Fleet Air Arm squadrons in Afghanistan – 845, 846 and 847.

Until now, however, we've not paid any attention to these unmanned aerial vehicles (or remotely-piloted aircraft), probably because the handful of British drones are operated by RAF 39 Squadron.

And, last time we checked, we're not Crab News.

But in the mixiblob world of today's Armed Forces, you're just as likely to find RN chaps on a RAF squadron as vice versa.

39 Sqn – whose motto, aptly is *die noctuque* (by day and night) is no exception.

Eight RN personnel are currently serving with the squadron – one pilot, one aircrewman, three image analysts, two meteorologists and an intelligence officer –



● The Reaper's electro-optic camera zooms in on a potential target during a training mission

with a crew of three 'on board' for each mission.

Now if you're picturing the sort of radio-controlled aircraft you find buzzing around a park on a summer's afternoon, erase that image right now.

Reaper's the length of a Learjet, has an enormous 66ft wingspan (a Harrier, for example, has a mere 25ft), can stay airborne for up to 28 hours (14 fully loaded), costs a 'mere' £6.5m (the next-generation Harrier, the Joint Strike Fighter, will set you back at least £50m each), and can deliver a payload of laser-guided bombs or armour-piercing missiles.

So, no, this is no toy plane.

And if you're also picturing a bloke stood in a field holding a small box with a large aerial,

that's another image you can scrub.

It requires a 'crew' of three to fly Reaper using cutting-edge satellite technology: one pilot (the current incumbent is Lynx pilot Lt Colin Kiernan), one aircrewman (currently WO1 Steve Clay, a Merlin ASW expert by trade) and one image analyst – either a Royal Marine or a specialist from the RN photographic branch.

The pilot and aircrewman sit at a control bank – a cockpit, if you like – with all the controls you'd typically find on a military aircraft, but with six video display screens replacing the window.

The pilot flies the Reaper as he would fly a typical aircraft, chatting with troops on the

ground in Afghanistan to share vital information.

While the pilot's engrossed in flight, the aircrewman keeps an eye on the Reaper's sensors – notably a radar which can scour the landscape for booby traps and targets, and an electro-optical camera.

The camera is the eye of the Reaper by day or night, its images can be beamed back both to Creech and to ground forces in Afghanistan.

How good is it? Well, from 20,000ft it's pretty straightforward for the camera to pick up a person on the ground taking a break.

Not surprisingly, the image analyst, a trained intelligence expert, pores over these images (not necessarily those of Taliban taking a break...) to spot potential targets and features of interest on the ground, briefing the aircrew and updating the mission plan if necessary.

And if he, the pilot or the aircrewman sight a danger on the ground, Reaper's eye in the sky also carries a laser, guiding the aircraft's bombs or missiles on to their targets.

"It really can be quite surreal – when you're in the control room/cockpit, you're actually at war, but the action is 10,000 miles away," says WO Clay.

"You become totally immersed in supporting the guys on the ground. The distance from the battlespace in no way absolves us of our responsibility."

With the skies of Afghanistan buzzing with Allied air power – Sea Kings, Apache Chinooks, Lynx, and Harriers on the British side alone – and the possibility of things rapidly changing on

the ground, both Britain and the US decided only trained aircrew should fly the Reaper.

"As aircrew jobs go, this really is at the cutting edge," WO Clay enthuses.

"And as we're celebrating 100 years of naval aviation, it's quite fitting that Royal Navy aircrew and Fleet Air Arm personnel are involved in operating the latest generation of aircraft."

"It really is a privilege for all of us to be involved in doing a job which ultimately helps save lives on the ground."

The team at Creech only take charge once the Reaper is airborne.

On the ground in Afghanistan, there's a small detachment – a 'launch and recovery element'.

They send the drone up, then pass control on to Creech (think Cape Kennedy handing over to Houston for a Shuttle mission) for the duration of the sortie.

When the mission's done, Nevada hands back over to the team in Afghanistan who guide the Reaper safely down to earth.

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Chatham renews links with affiliates

A SPELL alongside in the UK for Type 22 frigate HMS Chatham allowed her ship's company some time to catch up with affiliated organisations.

Sailors were pleased to have the opportunity to meet the Mayor of Medway, Cllr David Royle, and representatives of the Army Air Corps, the Merchant Taylors' Company, Chatham Royal Naval Association, Men of Kent and Kentish Men, Prior Park CCF and 5th Medway Cub Scouts.

Commanding Officer Cdr Simon Huntington said: "This has been a great opportunity for us to spend some time with our affiliates and to demonstrate to them, through the quality of our sailors and the challenging duties that they perform the importance of the Royal Navy's role in defending the UK and its interests worldwide."

In addition to meeting the captain and members of the ship's company, guests were briefed on Chatham's activities and spent some time finding out about the Senior Service.

The day culminated in a wardroom mess dinner, hosted by the frigate's officers.

Cllr Royle said: "I was very pleased to visit HMS Chatham for Affiliates Day and enjoyed having the opportunity to tour the ship and witness the excellent presentations and demonstrations."

HMS CATTISTOCK is in the latter stages of a circumnavigation of Great Britain.

And one of the visits which punctuated her clockwise progress was at Stroke City, in Northern Ireland.

Stroke City may be better known to some of you as Londonderry, while to others the preference is for Derry.

Stroke City is a tongue-in-cheek compromise for local sensibilities, playing on the 'Londonderry/Derry' conundrum.

Whatever the name, the welcome extended to Cattistock and her sailors was warm, with a busy programme keeping them on their toes throughout the five-day visit.

The Hunt-class ship emerged from a maintenance period in May, and was quickly off on her travels, making her way along the South Coast to Torbay in time for the D-Day commemorations.

The chances for members of the public to visit were limited by the fact that the ship was anchored off the breakwater.

Then it was off to Devonport for a pitstop before steaming north for her visit to Northern Ireland.

Navigating Officer Lt Edward Phillips said the journey would put the ship in the public eye at several points, but that there would also be trials and exercises on the Clyde and the Forth as she works up towards her next deployment.

The visit to Londonderry allowed her to fly the White Ensign during Foyle Days, a celebration of water activities along the river and lough, and the ship proved one of the highlights of the weekend, with more than 900 people going on board to satisfy their curiosity.

Her ship's company also supported the RNA Conference (see p31) and the rededication of the Derry-Newfie Bell, which commemorates Londonderry's crucial role as an escort ship base in World War 2.

The minehunter's Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr David Morgan,



● HMS Cattistock beneath the Foyle bridge at Madams Bank

Picture: Martin McKeown (Inpresspics.com)

said it had been interesting sailing in past the sites of the old Naval installations, from where ships had sailed to escort Atlantic convoys.

Lt Cdr Morgan welcomed the Mayor of Derry City Council, Cllr Paul Fleming, on board, as well as other local dignitaries, while the ship was invited to send groups to a number of civic receptions.

Three members of his ship's company hail from the north of Ireland, and all took the opportunity to invite their family on board or to visit them at home.

As Navy News went to press Cattistock was due in Chatham for Armed Forces Day before returning home to Portsmouth.

● Unusually good weather in the Irish Sea allowed some of the ship's company to do fitness circuits on deck



Ship proves her worth on hometown visit

A GULF-bound team of sailors found time in their schedule to take their ship 'home' before they head east.

MCM2 Crew 5 - motto *Five star: Simply the Best* - are preparing to deploy to the Gulf this summer.

But first they took the chance to sail HMS Hurworth to the north-east of England, the first such visit in three years.

The Hunt-class ship berthed in Hartlepool to allow the sailors a home-town run in the village of Hurworth-on-Tees, and to pay a visit to their namesake the Hurworth Hunt.

While in Hartlepool the minehunter welcomed the public on board, as well as inviting Sea Cadet units and Sea Scout troops to take a look around.

Hurworth Primary School

invited Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Charles Maynard and members of his ship's company to visit, and the sailors spent some time telling pupils and staff what the ship has been up to and her plans for the future.

The youngsters were keen to know whether the sailors would see any pirates while away from home, and will keep in touch through the internet and through more traditional methods - postcards.

Some of the ship's company went to one of Hurworth's affiliated charities, Rockcliffe Court residential care home, where they carried out some hard labour in the gardens, including painting the bandstand and various items of garden furniture.

They also took the time to meet staff and residents.

Another party visited the kennels of the local hunt, where they met more than 40 working dogs and then were introduced to the next generation - and such was the impression they made that the Master of the Hunt had to make sure none of the young puppies went back with the sailors in the form of a ship's mascot.

The hunt, which dates back to the 18th century, was presented with a new White Ensign, to be displayed at hunt meetings, and in return the ship was given a photographic recreation of a 19th century oil painting of the hunt.

Crew 5 will return to HMS Hurworth in the New Year after their deployment, and hope to mark that return with a parade through the County Durham village.

● CPO Sharkey Ward meets one of the eight-week-old puppies at the Hurworth Hounds kennels



Nuclear veterans win court hearing

VETERANS who say they have suffered ill health as a result of attending British nuclear weapons tests in the 1950s have won an important ruling in their battle for compensation from the Ministry of Defence.

The MOD had argued that the cases should be struck out as either time-barred or for having no reasonable prospect of success.

But in a hearing at the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court, Mr Justice Foskett decided, on the basis of ten 'lead' or test cases, that a group action covering more than 1,000 men could proceed to claim compensation from the MOD for the injuries and illnesses they say they have suffered as a result of being exposed to ionising radiation while witnessing nuclear tests in Australia and islands in the Pacific.

The judge noted that taking the state of knowledge into consideration, five of the ten cases would be time-barred, but that the necessary discretion should be applied as allowed in section 33 of the Limitation Act 1980.

This ruling does not have any bearing on any future claims for compensation and the relevant facts have yet to be tested - this decision simply allows such a claim to proceed, and another court would decide on the merits of such a claim.

Of the 1,011 cases in the group action, 196 refer to Royal Navy personnel, 232 to Army and 266 to RAF.

A number of claims are now being pursued by descendants of men who have died.

The group claim also includes almost 200 Fijians and 125 New Zealanders.

Mr Justice Foskett stated that he hoped both sides could reach a settlement out of court rather than the issue going to trial.

Following the ruling, Doug Hern, litigation secretary of the British Nuclear Test Veterans Association (BNTVA), said: "The judgment given by Mr Justice Foskett is the opening of a door to justice."

He added: "It's absolutely brilliant news - we've waited a long time for this."

"I'm just sorry that a lot of my friends and colleagues, who witnessed the same events as I did in the 1950s, did not survive long enough to see this day."

"We are now hoping the Government will meet us across a table, rather than dragging it on through the courts."

"But, make no mistake, this is a landmark victory for veterans."

"We hope that the powers that be do not force us into a long, protracted litigation, but resolve this out of court before more of the veterans have passed away, as have many since the court case first started three years ago."

Arboretum scoops top award

LAND restoration at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire has scooped a national award.

Lafarge Aggregates, which leases the former sand and gravel workings at Alrewas to the Arboretum for a peppercorn rent, and the Arboretum itself were awarded the Mineral Products Association's Cooper-Heyman Cup, which marks out restoration projects of an exceptional standard.

The 150-acre site recently announced plans to transform itself into a world-class centre for remembrance, and already considers itself to be the main focus for remembrance outside London.

More than 50,000 trees have been planted at the Arboretum, helping to create a much-admired wooded parkland.



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Registered Charity No. 1075015

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Monique Bateman

or Laurene Smith

RN & RM Children's Fund

311 Twyford Avenue

Portsmouth

PO2 8RN

Telephone: 023 9263 9534

Fax: 023 9267 7574

Email: rnchildren@btconnect.com



Still time to salute Services

EVEN after the big day itself there will still be plenty of chances to get involved in an event celebrating the Armed Forces of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

The first is at the Marryat Hall in the heart of Dundee, organised by Craigowl Primary School with the help of the Royal Marines, amongst others, on Wednesday July 1.

The weekend of July 4-5 sees a number of events, concentrated in the south of England.

Portsmouth hosts two days of events on Southsea Common showcasing all three Services.

Parades on both days will include cadets, serving personnel and veterans, accompanied by military bands.

Less than 40 miles north at the same time is the Hampshire and Rushmoor Armed Forces Day Salute in the shape of the Aldershot Army Show, taking place at Queen's Parade.

On Saturday July 4 Abingdon pays its tribute in the form of a fete-style event featuring a series of military displays on the pitches outside Dalton Barracks.

Folkestone also holds its Armed Forces Day on the Saturday with a free family event at the Leas Bandstand all afternoon celebrating all aspects of the Services.

On Sunday July 5 activities at the County Hall car park in Haverfordwest will include a static military and vintage vehicle display, while RAF Shawbury bases its big day around the Assault Glider Trust, on the same date.

Surrey RBL once again stages a special British Armed Forces and Veterans Race Day at Lingfield Park on Wednesday July 8, to which veterans from all conflicts and current Servicemen and women are especially invited.

There will be a parade of standards and a march-past by veterans, and the day will end with the Sunset Ceremony.

Ayr hosts an Armed Forces Day parade and static display on Friday July 10, and the town will also hold a civic reception for the Armed Forces and veterans marching on the parade.

Dorchester offers a varied programme over the weekend of July 17-19 including World War 2 music hall, quiz trails for children at the Keep Military Museum, a march and music from the 1940s.

Caernarfon's day is at the castle and surrounding area on Saturday July 18, while Inverness holds its Armed Forces Weekend at the Northern Meeting Park on July 25-26, one of the highlights of which will be a parade led by a massed pipe band.



● Marines in an Offshore Raiding Craft fly the Armed Forces Day flag upriver in Brunei during Exercise Commando Rajah, part of the Taurus 09 task group's jungle training in the Far East
Picture: LA(Phot) Bernie Henesy

Armed Forces Day celebrations begin

THE COUNTDOWN to Armed Forces Day had nearly finished for many towns and cities around the UK as *Navy News* went to press.

But a handful of communities have already demonstrated their support for the Services past and present by staging their events early.

One such event was that organised by Orkney, which featured a parade through the streets of Kirkwall between the local branch of the Royal British Legion and the kirk green in front of St Magnus Cathedral.

Around 150 Service personnel joined the march, which included veterans and cadets.

A similar event took place on the same day in Kircaldy, Fife.

Brig David Allfrey, Commander 51 (Scottish) Brigade, is the man behind the Armed Forces Day effort north of the border.

He said: "It's stunning to see how councils and communities across Scotland have fallen in behind the Armed Forces and are working tremendously hard to ensure they get a celebration they deserve."

"It means a great deal to us. This is the first year we've joined up with the veterans to celebrate Armed Forces Day and I am sure it will grow bigger each year."

"Armed Forces Day should be seen as distinct from Armistice Day on November 11 each year, which is a day of reflection and remembrance of those who have fallen."

"June 27, on the other hand, should be a day of fun, pride and spectacle."

"Of course, we will also take time to think of those serving on operations abroad, and those who have been injured or have made



● Defence minister Lord Drayson's Aston Martin Vantage GT2 in its Le Mans racing livery - complete with Armed Forces Day decals

the ultimate sacrifice in the course of their duty."

Of the Orkney event, Brig Allfrey said: "We saw sailors, soldiers, airmen and their families mixing with cadets from the three Services, our veterans and supporters - all having a great day."

"I hope that members of the public who do not normally make contact with the Services take the opportunity to get to know us a bit better."

"It is fine and honourable to be a Scottish Serviceman."

Government minister Lord Drayson also played his part in raising the profile of the initiative by adding Armed Forces Day decals to the car his team drove in the Le Mans 24-hour endurance race.

Racing fanatic and entrepreneur Paul Drayson is Minister with responsibilities for Science and Innovation in both the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

But he put his political career on the back burner a couple of years ago to concentrate on competing

at Le Mans - and while his Aston Martin Vantage GT2, which runs on cellulose-based bioethanol fuel, fell just short of running the full 24-hours, the team still took 11th place and Armed Forces Day was promoted to a wider audience.

And talking of fuel efficiency, a group of transport workers in Blackpool were gearing up to haul a tram as *Navy News* went to press.

Led by former matelot Mick Smith, now a driver with Metro Coastlines, and his colleague Carl O'Hara, the group includes a number of ex-Services personnel.

They hope to pull HMS Blackpool, an illuminated frigate weighing 14 tons, along the promenade from Rigby Road to the North Pier to raise money for Help for Heroes and BLESMA Homes.

● Sea Cadet Keiran Roberts (13) of the Orkney unit inspects medals during Armed Forces Day in Kirkwall

Picture: Mark Owens



Wings over Somerset - and over Cornwall

TWO of the highlights of the Fly Navy 100 programme take place in the West Country this month.

First off the ground will be RNAS Yeovilton's International Air Day on Saturday July 11, which celebrates naval air power through the ages.

The plan is to show examples of the very first jet-powered designs to operate from British aircraft carriers at sea, with other planes illustrating the development of jet fighter technology.

So, if all goes to schedule, visitors will see the Vampire and Sea Vixen in the skies over Somerset, as well as the more familiar Harrier.

Other aircraft lined up to participate, as *Navy News* went to press, included the Typhoon, F16, Rafale, Spitfire, Seafire and Vulcan on the fixed-wing side, with Sea King, Merlin, Lynx, Chinook and Apache representing the rotary world.

And no air show would be complete without the military air display team *par excellence* - the RN's own Black Cats.

Oh yes, the Red Arrows are also booked to put in an appearance.

On the ground, the Royal Marines will be providing music and a commando display, while the air station's Brickwoods field gunners will go through their paces.

More than 200 vehicles will be on display, including classic and vintage cars and motorcycles and military vehicles.

For more details see www.yeoviltonairday.co.uk

Further west, RNAS Culdrose promises to blow visitors away when they take a look around the air station, home to almost 100 aircraft at their Air Day on Wednesday July 29.

An arena programme between 10.30am and 5.45pm will include RN field gunners, a Royal Marines band, a motorcycle display team, MOD police dog demonstrations and Sea Cadet drill sessions.

Aircraft provisionally booked to put in an appearance include Lynx, Merlin, Sea King, Harrier, Typhoon, Hawk, Hurricane, Mustang and Seafire.

More details can be found online at www.royalnavy.mod.uk/server/show/nav.6201



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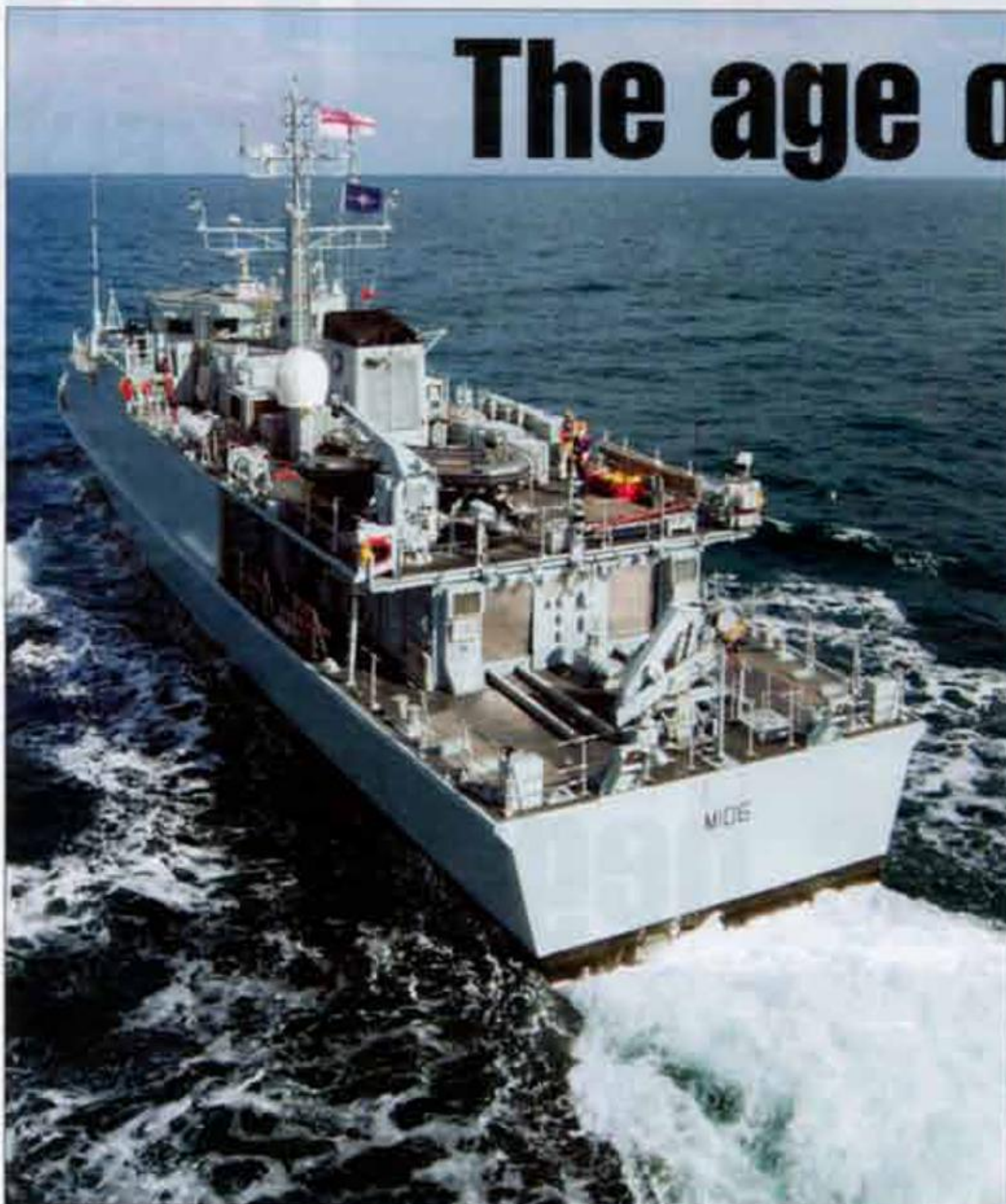
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The age of extremes



● HMS Penzance about to conduct winching drills – as seen from a Sea King from HMS Gannet – during the ship's attachment to NATO, prior to the current crew taking charge of her

Picture: WQ1 Ian Arthur, FRPU North

YOU have to hand it to HMS Penzance: she doesn't go for the middle ground.

It's either been very big – or minuscule – so far on her spring and summer European 'tour'.

First, the small. Thanks to her size, the 450-ton vessel can visit places many of her larger RN companions cannot.

Such as Fort William. The minehunter slipped through the Corran Narrows and into Loch Linnhe.

There she demonstrated what she can do as local schoolchildren and Sea Cadets came on board.

Fort William was a veritable metropolis compared with Penzance's next port of call along Scotland's west coast, however.

With such a small ship's company, it's pretty tricky for a Sandown to (temporarily) increase the populace of a port by ten per cent.

But not in the tiny fishing village of Kinlochbervie, a dozen miles south of Cape Wrath, home to barely 400 people.

And a sizeable number of those, led by pupils from the local high school, filed aboard during Penzance's weekend stay.

Aboard for both Scottish visits was the local RN commander, Cdr Charles Stevenson, Naval Regional Commander for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Rather more visitors were welcomed at port No.3, the great city of Hamburg (as we featured last month). What we didn't tell you was the 'fun' Penzance had getting there.

It takes nine hours to reach

the great German city from the mouth of the Elbe – the river's ferocious currents meant that at times the minehunter was doing barely 5kts.

From there it was on to another major city, Portsmouth, for a quick spot of maintenance, before resuming mine warfare tasks in UK waters.

The Sandown-class warship is currently home to MCM1 Crew 4 – one of eight ships' companies which rotate around the entire squadron.

Until the early spring, Crew 4 could be found operating HMS Pembroke in the Gulf.

Penzance's younger sister was their home for two years; the sailors guided the ship out of refit, through the rigours of Operational Sea Training, then took Pembroke to Bahrain as one half of the duo (Grimsby was her partner) replacing HMS Ramsey and Blyth.

Once back in Scotland, Crew 4 spent some time on leave, then began getting used to Penzance – there are slight differences among the eight Sandowns.

Once accustomed to their new surroundings, the ship's company was thrown in at the deep end: a lovely spell of OST. Clearly, they passed because since then the ship's been 'on tour'.

The Sandown is the fourth bearer of the name of the Cornish town.

The first was a sixth-rate which served at the turn of 17th-18th Centuries. The second Penzance, a fifth-rate, earned the name's first battle honour in the Caribbean during 19 years' service in the mid-18th Century.



Martinique.....1762
Atlantic.....1940

Class: Sandown-class mine counter-measures vessel
Pennant number: M106
Builder: Vospier Thornycroft, Woolston
Launched: March 11, 1997
Commissioned: May 14, 1998
Displacement: 450 tons
Length: 172ft (52.5m)
Beam: 34ft (10.5m)
Draught: 7½ft (2.3m)
Speed: 13kt
Complement: 34-40
Propulsion: 2 x Paxman Valenta diesels generating 1,523hp; Voith-Schneider propulsion; 2 x Schottel bow thrusters
Range: 2,500 nautical miles at 12kt
Sensors: Type 2093 mine search and classification sonar
Armament: 1 x 30mm; 1 x Minigun; Seafox mine disposal system
Motto: *diligenter pensa* (Diligent thought)

The second battle honour was added by the ill-fated Penzance No.3.

The sloop was sunk by U-boat ace Victor Oehm in U37 while escorting convoy SC1 off Iceland in August 1940. Seven men from her 97 crew were picked up by a merchant ship – which in turn was sunk that same night by U37.

HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.63

Boatswain John Sheppard VC

IN SIX years of conflict, there were episodes in the war at sea where individual bravery – sometimes coupled with technological brilliance – stirred the hearts of men.

Operation Frankton (better known as the Cockleshell Heroes) Operation Jaywick (a canoe attack on Japanese shipping in Singapore), the Italian X-MAS chameleons crippling the British fleet in harbour, midget submarines striking at enemy warships in the Strait of Johore – all were the epitome of special operations.

Long before the limpet mine became the saboteur's weapon of choice, before man could safely travel beneath the waves, before collapsible canoes, indeed before there were such things as 'operations' and codenames, a middle-aged rating laid the foundation for such attacks – single-handedly.

The progenitor of these future tip-and-run raids was boatswain John Sheppard, a 37-year-old senior rate aboard the screw battleship HMS St Jean d'Acre.

In the summer of 1855, the 101-gun battleship was investing the great Crimean port of Sevastopol.

The Russians had already scuttled more than a dozen vessels in an effort to keep the Anglo-French fleet at bay during a siege which was by then in its tenth month.

The harbour remained a mainstay of the enemy's defence of the great fortress city – and it remained rich with targets.

And that sparked an idea in the mind of Sheppard. He took it to his captain, the affable Henry Keppel, who took it to his admiral, Sir Edmund Lyons, along with Sheppard's special apparatus.

Sheppard had devised a unique canoe, a canvas duck punt, with a freeboard of just three inches and a centre section capable of carrying a bomb – an 18in iron case packed with explosives, detonated by a fuse which would burn under water.

The senior rate would paddle across Sevastopol harbour in the dead of night, fix the charge to a Russian man o'war, then return having caused mayhem.

Lyons was "amused" and approved Sheppard's ingenious plan. For the next three weeks he practised ('attacking' HMS London to prove such a raid was feasible) and waited for a suitably dark night.

That night was July 15-16. Sheppard was launched from the Crimean shore in his punt and "was immediately lost to sight, nor was there the slightest sound," Keppel recorded in his diary.

And then the captain waited for the night to be torn by the sound of a Russian warship being ripped apart by Sheppard's charge. And he waited. And he waited.

Three hours passed. No explosion – and the first strains of dawn were cast upon the Crimea. On the shoreline Keppel and his comrades were all too visible to Russian troops and began to move away from the water through the scrubland. The captain was distraught at the thought of Sheppard's demise – "If caught, he would be shot as a spy".

But he was not. Later that morning, the sailor walked into a British camp having ditched his canoe.

After paddling silently between numerous Russian steamers, Sheppard had closed to within 400 yards of the men o'war, only for the harbour to suddenly come alive with enemy boats as troops were ferried across.

For an hour, the boatswain waited unseen in his canoe. With first light, there was no hope of making the attack – nor of returning to his launching point. He made for French-held shoreline, then sought the British encampment.

A month later he repeated the attempt – again in vain. The "plucky fellow", his invention and singular bravery inspired Keppel and Lyons, however. Eighteen months later he was among the very first men to be gazetted for the newly-cast Victoria Cross.



photographic memories



TO QUOTE The Navy Lark "If you carry on that course you will be doing 50 knots up Gosport High Street!"... which would be quite an achievement for sailors in training at HMS Raleigh in Torpoint. Our delve into the photographic archive of the Imperial War Museum takes us to Cornwall in 1941 and new recruits learning to pull a boat on dry land in preparation for nearby waters. The picture forms part of a photographic essay on the progress of a man joining the RN, following him through training. (A3141) ■ THIS photograph – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



88th birthday (re)treat

TAKING the salute on his 88th birthday, flanked by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jonathon Band and the Commandant General Royal Marines Major General Garry Robison, the Duke of Edinburgh enjoys the music and pageantry of the Massed Bands of the Royal Marines on Horse Guards.

It's been three years since Prince Philip – Captain General of the Royal Marines – has watched the men and women of the RM Band Service perform their trademark ceremony, Beating Retreat, in the heart of London.

This year's ceremony – staged on three consecutive evenings before a full house – saw 220 musicians drawn from across the entire Band Service perform old nautical favourites such as *Heart of Oak* and *A Life on the Ocean Wave*, spirited Army marches and a special composition to celebrate the centennial of naval aviation.

RM musicians have been performing Beating Retreat for their Captain General roughly every two to three years since 1960.

The 2009 event was the first under Lt Col Nick Grace as the

RM Band's Principal Director of Music.

"The massed bands gave a fantastic performance – the positive feedback from the audience was overwhelming," said Lt Col Grace.

"Many of the musicians have only recently returned from operational duties in Afghanistan. It is of great credit to them – and the Band Service – that they are able to switch back to their musical role and perform with such professionalism."

As well as being a rousing crowd-pleaser, the three evenings of Beating Retreat raised thousands of pounds for a string of military charities, including Help for Heroes, Seafarers UK and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines charities.

A 36-song CD of music performed at the event has been produced by the RM Band Service priced £12 (£14.40 overseas); see www.royalmarinesbands.co.uk/catalogue/Horseguards2009.htm

Pictures: PO(Phot)
Amanda Reynolds



Veterans return to the beaches

VETERANS of D-Day returned to the beaches in their thousands to mark the 65th anniversary of the start of the Battle of Normandy.

Old soldiers, sailors and airmen attended ceremonies at dozens of towns, villages and cemeteries along the French coast to remember those who died in the fight against the Nazis.

The Prince of Wales, Prime Minister Gordon Brown, US President Barack Obama and French President Nicolas Sarkozy all had prominent roles in ceremonies of remembrance, including those at Caen, Bayeux, Arromanches and Colleville-sur-Mer.

Ceremonies were also held on this side of the Channel for those who could not make it to France.

The occasion was particularly poignant for members of the LST and Landing Craft Association, a

key member of which died earlier this year.

Maurice Hillebrandt was the driving force behind the campaign to create a memorial to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines crews, especially those who died or were wounded, of more than 4,000 landing vessels which transported Allied soldiers and their equipment to the Normandy beaches.

Supported by Lt Cdr Jim Brend

(Retd), the four-year campaign came to fruition on June 6 2000 when the memorial was opened by the Duke of Edinburgh close to the shore at Ouistreham, near Caen.

That memorial now takes its place amongst the hundreds peppered along the Normandy coast which draw visitors throughout the year.

The struggle for a foothold in

France, Operation Neptune, was the opening phase of the wider Operation Overlord, and by the end of June 1944, less than three weeks after D-Day, it is estimated that more than 850,000 troops, almost 150,000 vehicles and more than half a million tons of supplies had been landed, most of which passed through the two prefabricated Mulberry harbours which were towed across the Channel.

Room commemorates Hood

A REFURBISHED room at the Royal Maritime Club in Portsmouth has been renamed to mark a long-standing relationship with a ship association.

The Hood Room is the club's boardroom, and doubles as a function room.

But for members of the HMS Hood Association, the important thing is that it helps keep alive the memory of their celebrated battlecruiser.

Four members of the association, including two who actually served in the ship, gathered at the club to present a picture of the ship and a framed embroidered ship's crest to club general manager John Alderson.

Association chairman Peter Heys noted how the group have held its annual reunion weekends at the club for many years, with attendances generally topping 100.

"For all the years we have been coming here we have had an excellent relationship with the club's management and staff, and are always made to feel very welcome," he said.

As an additional mark of respect, a small bar in the corner of the Hood Room is to be named the Briggs Bar after the association's president, Ted Briggs, who died last year at the age of 85.



● HMS Hood Association members Keith Evans, Derick Collins, Peter Heys and Alec Kellaway with the ship's badge

Ted was the last survivor of the sinking of Hood in the Battle of the Denmark Strait; on May 24 1941 the ship, in company with the new battleship HMS Prince of Wales, engaged Bismarck and Prinz Eugen west of Iceland, and a German shell caused one of Hood's magazines to explode.

Just three men of the 1,418 ship's company survived.



Falklands lodge opened

A LODGE for veterans of the Falklands Conflict has opened in Stanley, thanks to the concerted fund-raising efforts of the Falklands Veterans Foundation and the South Atlantic Medal Association 1982.

The idea for a home from home for visiting veterans was initiated by Derek 'Smokey' Cole, who served in HMS Intrepid, around five years ago, and in 2007 he got together with Tony Davies, the chairman of SAMA82 and a former Welsh Guardsman, to get the ball rolling.

The Royal British Legion made the first (and largest) donation, and other ex-Service charities piled in, which meant the target was achieved relatively quickly, and the spacious four-bedroom Lodge was officially opened earlier this year – around 18 months after work began.

Although the initial capital cost of around a third of a million pounds has been covered, fund-raising is

still continuing to pay for running costs.

In recognition of the help received from all the major Service and ex-Service charities, the Lodge has been opened for use by members of the Forces serving in the Falklands, when it is not in use by veterans and their families, for the purpose of family visits.

Since opening in February, the Lodge has been fully booked, and with holders of the South Atlantic Medal 1982 eligible for indulgence flights on the Falklands Air Bridge, a trip to the islands has become easier and more affordable.

Information on both the Lodge and indulgence passages can be obtained from the SAMA 82 website www.sama82.org or the SAMA 82 office at Blackwood, Gwent, address PO Box no 1982, or from the Falklands Veterans Foundation website at www.fvf.org.uk



● The Devonport team practises for the Brickwoods event

Picture: PO(Phot) Sean Clee



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Pompey bang on schedule

THEY came from far and wide to compete – but it was a team from just along the road who took the honours at the Brickwoods field gun competition at HMS Collingwood.

Part of Fareham training establishment's annual open day, the competition – sponsored by VT Flagship – drew 22 crews from around the UK and beyond, the overseas elements being those from Naples and Gibraltar.

All three Services, plus the civilian cohort, were represented among the 18-strong crews.

But it was Portsmouth Naval Base (two crew members pictured celebrating, right) which took the honours, beating their closest rivals from the Army by less than a second.

Some teams managed to get a good run-up to the event, an offshoot of the Inter-Command competition which was acknowledged to be one of the toughest team sports in the world. Others didn't.

HMS Raleigh, for example, practised hard in their spare time from the beginning of April, though they failed to break into the top six.

The Maritime Reserves, training at the home of gunnery, HMS Excellent on Whale Island, were hamstrung by the fact their crew had civilian jobs to do, and they only had two weeks to familiarise themselves with the gun and learn how to trundle it up and down the course – their pride and spirit were rewarded when trainer, CPOPT Penberthy, won the Endeavour trophy for overcoming the greatest adversity over the season.

By contrast, Devonport fielded a mix of old hands and young blood, sailors and Marines, who started fitness training in March and received their gun the following month.

The top teams were: 1, Portsmouth Naval Base (1m 21.35s); 2, REME (Army) (1m 22.07s); 3, HMS Seahawk (1m 26.56); 4, HMS Sultan A (1m 30.53s, 3s penalty); 5, HMS Heron (1m 33.97s, 3s penalty); 6, Abbey Wood (1m 35.97s, 6s penalty).

More than 6,000 people attended the open day, enjoying live music, a funfair and displays as well as the gun competition.



Picture: Cpl Al Marsh (RAF)

Rob proves he is the business

A NAVAL officer has won a prestigious management award for his work with a ship's flight.

Lt Cdr Rob Milligan has been declared Northern Ireland's Chartered Manager of the Year, recognising his "exceptional leadership and management credentials".

To achieve the required standard, Rob had to demonstrate how he had made a significant and real difference to the Royal Navy, undergoing a tough assessment process including the submission of a portfolio of work illustrating the business impact he had made.

Rob is moving from RNAS Yeovilton, where he is training officer for the Lynx simulator facility, to become regional recruiting officer for Northern Ireland.

His submission was based on his work as the flight commander of destroyer HMS Manchester, where he had to prepare and train his team for an operational deployment to the Gulf at very short notice.

The Chartered Management Institute awards this accolade as a standard of best practice and a quality assurance benchmark for professional managers.

And a delighted Rob said: "The skills required of Chartered Managers are just as applicable in an operational environment as they are in business."

Teenager again

FOR the second time in his remarkable life, Henry Allingham became a teenager when he celebrated his 113th birthday at a private party for family and friends at HMS President in London.

Following a fly-past by Navy Lynx from 815 NAS and the delivery of his birthday cake by Royal Marines in a raiding craft, Henry said: "It's wonderful - I never expected this honour."

Born in Clapton, East London, in 1896, Henry - now officially the oldest man in the world - joined the Royal Naval Air Service in September 1915 and has maintained his links with the Service ever since.

He saw action in World War 1 in France and at the Battle of Jutland, flying seaplane patrols among other tasks, and became a founder member of the RAF when the RNAS and Royal Flying Corps merged in April 1918.

Too old for active service in World War 2 but having been an engineer all his adult life, Henry volunteered to work on the development of magnetic mine countermeasures for the Admiralty.

Henry was happily married to Dorothy for 52 years, with whom he had two daughters.

He now has five grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, 14 great-great grandchildren and one great-great-great-grandchild.

He played golf until he was 90,



● Rear Admiral Simon Charlier with birthday teenager (second time around) Henry Allingham

rode a bike until he was 100 and lived on his own until he was 110, only moving to St Dunstan's three years ago, as his eyesight started to become a problem.

He has kept his home in Eastbourne and inspects it every

couple of weeks.

Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, Chief of Staff (Aviation) - the Fleet Air Arm chief - said: "It is an absolute privilege to host this event."

"This year is the centenary of

naval aviation, and yet Henry goes back way before that.

"Henry's longevity, spirit, fun and humour encompass everything about the Fleet Air Arm."

"Were he slightly younger I would be happy to have him back!"

Endeavour award for Gary

PETTY Officer Gary Redfern, the Building Manager of the air traffic control tower at RNAS Culdrose, has been presented with the Culdrose Award for Special Endeavour by the station's Commanding Officer, Capt Graeme Mackay.

The award recognises the contribution made by individuals to the efficient and effective running of the air station, and is open to all Service and civilian employees.

Pupils take a keen interest

YOU couldn't ask for much more than an enthusiastic audience when you have something to say - and that is exactly what Lt Dee McKenna found when she visited a Hampshire school.

Lt McKenna, of the Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood, took time out of her busy teaching schedule to call in at Newtown Primary School in Gosport to give a careers talk to around 60 pupils.

While telling them about life in the Royal Navy, Dee referred to her own former role as navigator on board frigate HMS St Albans, which opened the floodgates for questions.

"It's great to see how excited the children were when I told them about some of the things that we do in the Navy," said Dee (pictured right).

"I enjoyed having the opportunity to chat with the children about the job I do and answering the children's questions."

"They seemed to be really intrigued in finding out about the places I have been to."

Dee has been in the RN for ten years, eight of them at sea, and is now passing her knowledge on to trainee navigators.



Jimmy the (number) One

THE hair is short, and he's from California - but there is no escaping the past for Jimmy Osmond.

Yes, this is Little Jimmy Osmond, of *Long Haired Lover from Liverpool* fame, and naturally he is pictured aboard HMS Liverpool in Portsmouth.

Why? To promote *Chicago*, of course. Confused? It's alright, let us explain.

He's promoting *Chicago* - the musical which left the West End for a tour of the provinces, including Southsea's Kings Theatre.

Jimmy's still best known in the UK for that Christmas No.1 in 1972, and he remains the youngest person to top the charts.

Now back on the road again, it wasn't a million to one against Jimmy dropping in on Liverpool during his tour to check it out... albeit one prefixed with 'HMS'. Some might think it's destiny.

"I didn't even know where Liverpool was back when I recorded *Long Haired Lover*," Jimmy admitted. "But I'm grateful to have been part of a song like that - one that everybody remembers, whether you like it or not."

Liverpool can be found in dry dock somewhere just off No.3 Basin in Portsmouth, having just been re-floated as she undergoes a refit which will carry her through the last days of her career.



● LS Kelly Smith, of HMS Liverpool, welcomes Jimmy Osmond on board the destroyer

Picture: LA(Phot) Alex Knott

That flooding-up process was watched by Jimmy and former *EastEnders* Emma Barton.

"In some ways, being in the Forces is like showbusiness - when the pressure is on, you have to be able to perform whatever happens. Ultimately it's teamwork and professionalism which ensures a successful outcome," Jimmy said.

Having given a tour of the destroyer, the two actors (Emma was going home on this occasion, as she was born in Pompey) invited sailors to watch the show.

"It's a welcome treat at a busy

time," said CO Cdr Craig Wood. "The ship's company are working really hard to get Liverpool back into shape for the next phase of training."

Liverpool has done the business for the Navy from the tropical heat of the Caribbean to the chilly winds of the South Atlantic dealing with the results of the odd natural calamity along the way, like a hurricane or a volcano, and after all that is ready to take her place in the Fleet once again as the clock ticks down to her big finish in around three years' time or so.

Diesel submariners



● From left, Cdr Eric Sykes, Commanding Officer of HMS Triumph, with AB Andy Love and ET Joe Rush

NUCLEAR submarine HMS Triumph now has a diesel engine.

Not on board - the hunter-killer has been officially twinned with a Class 50 locomotive of the Bodmin and Wenford Railway which bears the same name.

No 50042 was built at English Electric's Vulcan Foundry works and delivered to BR in late 1968.

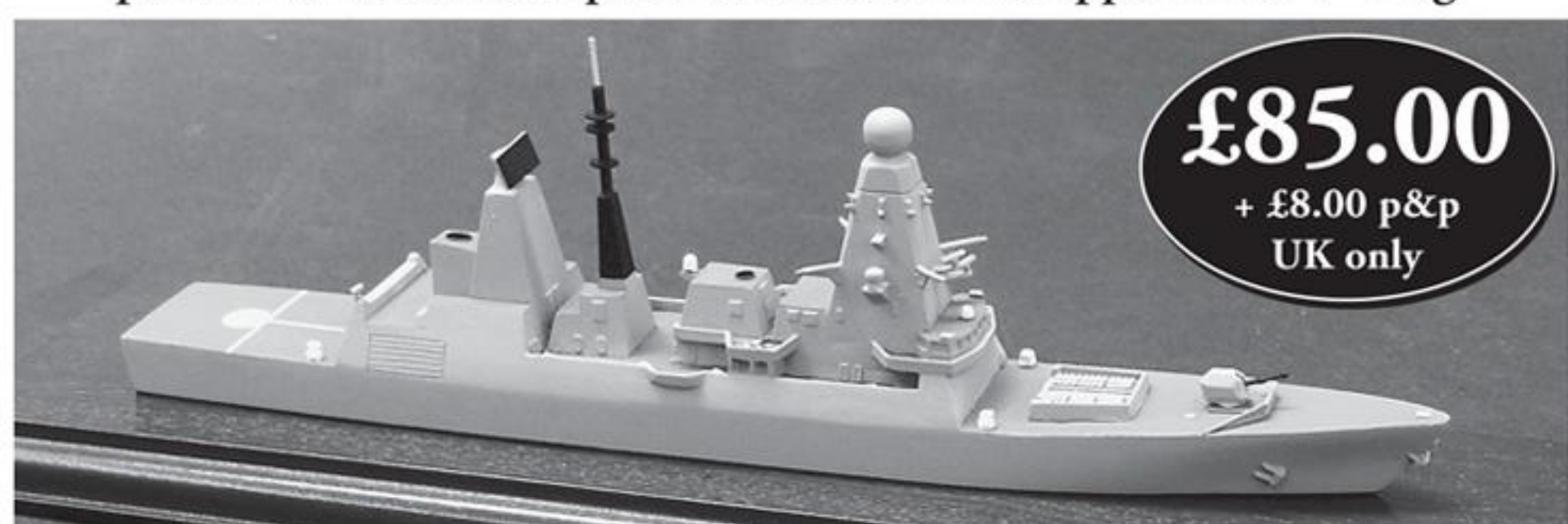
She spent her early years hauling express passenger trains between Crewe and Glasgow before transferring to the Western Region, becoming a familiar sight between London, Plymouth and Penzance.

Retired in 1990, the loco was bought by the private railway and restored to pristine condition; since 1993 she has worked the B&WR lines.

The twinning took place at Bodmin General station, and was attended by the Commanding Officer of HMS Triumph, Cdr Eric Sykes, and crew members AB Andy Love and ET Joe Rush, as well as members of the Triumph Fire Fighting School at Devonport.

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● To boulder go... Sutherland's sailors celebrate painting the rocks overlooking Eriboll

Sutherland's age of rock

THERE'S a rock theme to things involving the good ship Sutherland this month.

High above Loch Eriboll – roughly 70 miles north of Inverness near the northwest tip of mainland Scotland – some of the greatest names in naval history are spelled out in boulders: Valiant, Swift, Whirlwind, and, most poignantly, Hood.

The loch was once a natural anchorage for the Fleet and off-duty sailors would climb the western shore to spell out their ship's name 6ft-high in boulders on the hillside.

The tradition died out post-war with the loch no longer regularly visited by HM ships, but Sutherland revived it, joining the illustrious stone armada back in 2002.

Since then the rocks have taken a bit of a pounding from the Scottish elements, so with several tins of paints, sailors headed up the hillside to daub the boulders white once more.

"It was a long trek from the ship to get to the loch, but worth it for the amazing scenery, the friendly locals, and the chance to contribute to a piece of naval history," said LWEA 'Ash' Peres, one of the painters.

(The stones can best be seen, according to locals, from the lay-by on the A838 near the disused quarry at Port-na-con on the western shore of the loch.)

Although Loch Eriboll was a popular anchorage for the RN, HMS Sutherland chose to berth in Invergordon for her visit to the Highlands – her first in four years.

That meant a three-hour journey to the stones and other towns in one of Britain's largest – and least populated – counties (the largest 'town' boasts just 1,200 inhabitants).

The various messes aboard the Type 23 are named for the remote Sutherland communities of Dornoch, Golspie, Durness, Lairg, Rosehall and Kinlochbervie, all of which received a visit from the sailors during their weekend in the Highlands.

And some of the locals headed in the opposite direction (for some it meant a 250-mile round-trip) to tour the frigate; they were among more than 600 locals who crossed the gangway to look around the Type 23.

On the sporting front, Sutherland's footballers lost out 5-1 to Tain Thistle FC of the Ross-shire Welfare League (currently they're riding second in the table), while the rugby union side drew 12 apiece with Ross and Sutherland RFC.

Right, back to rock... rock legend, in fact, one Roderick David Stewart.

Rod – or rather Rod's *doppelgänger* Paul Metcalf – hopped aboard the frigate during a brief break from Operational Sea Training.

The real Rod is holding his only UK concert this year just up the road from Devonport at Home Park, home to Plymouth Argyle.

To promote that July 2 gig, his lookalike spent some time aboard the frigate – and reminded the ship's company of the Scottish rocker's iconic hit *Sailing*, indelibly linked with the RN thanks to the documentary series *Sailor*.

Most of Sutherland's ship's company are too young to remember Rod's 1975 No.1 (in fact most of them were not even born...).

But when's that ever stopped matelots camping it up (*clubz especially from the pose on the photograph taken by LA(Phot) 'Chilli' Carney*)?

As for the ship, she'll be done with OST by the end of this month and after summer leave will conduct maritime security operations.



Fremington steels 702

IT'S important in the middle of a war to get your priorities right.

So while the skies are buzzing with enemy jets, there are downed aircrew needing rescuing in the woods, the foe is closing in on the ground, nothing matters more than collecting your thoughts over a nice cuppa.

Ok, perhaps we're stretching things a little, but learning the basics in the field – the ability to start a fire and cook food – means the more complicated tasks fall into place.

Four helicopters from 702 Naval Air Squadron – the Lynx conversion unit – decamped from their usual home at Yeovilton to Fremington on the south bank of the Taw in north-west Devon.

For three days eight trainee aircrew were tested on their ability to operate over the land – not typically the domain of 702 or its front-line equivalent 815 NAS – assisted by nine staff, two dozen maintainers and a bowser detachment (the Lynx is a thirsty beast when it's

heavily in use as it was here).

All eight trainees – three observers and five pilots – are undergoing their year-long operational conversion training having already learned the nuts and bolts of rotary flight.

And that conversion training includes 'overland support' – the ability to operate from a makeshift base ashore, ferrying troops around, landing in very confined areas, flying in formation hugging the terrain, all while there are threats in the skies and on the ground.

Fremington Camp, about five miles west of Barnstaple, provides the ideal location to test all this. It was built in 1943 to prepare for the impending invasion of Fortress Europe and housed American wounded evacuated from France the following year.

In the closing months of the war it became the School of Combined Operations and since the 1970s, it's served as a general purpose training centre...

... Which is exactly what the 702 team used it for. The student fliers were charged with planning combat sorties at very short notice – lifting loads, picking up and dropping off troops – while Hawk jets from FRADU buzzed their Lynx.

"That gave the student pilots the chance to carry out their newly-learned evasive manoeuvres which tested the constitution of even the most seasoned of instructors," said Lt Adam Rudkin.

Once stomachs had settled back on the ground, students, maintainers and instructors tucked into a varied diet of burger and beans, corned beef hash and biscuit brown courtesy of the 24-hour ration packs.

As for that cup of char, well that was brewed after one of the students had rustled up a fire. It was downed by the senior man in the Fleet Air Arm, Chief-of-Staff (Aviation) Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, who joined the 702 detachment for

a time on Dartmoor to discuss the training.

That training included a spot of SERE – Survive, Evade, Resist and Extract – in the woods near the camp with 'downed' aircrew expected to avoid capture (think *Behind Enemy Lines* minus the Hollywood kerfuffle...).

Not everyone in Fremington is hostile, thankfully. Certainly not pupils from the village primary school who were invited to tour the Lynx and watch some of the helicopters arriving and departing the camp.

Dartmoor and environs are not renowned for their especially clement weather and so it proved again. That said, the maintainers ensured all four Lynx were 100 per cent serviceable throughout the exercise – despite being a good 70 miles from all their usual kit.

"It was a busy flying programme and the detachment was a success – enjoyable, yet tiring," said Lt Rudkin.

"It was also a great success for the engineers. The helicopters flew over 30 hours in wet weather, away from squadron support."



Severn, five and VIII

THERE could be no more fitting a representative at a promotional push for the country's most famous – and historic – chain of ports than its oldest naval squadron.

The Cinque Ports trace their history back to somewhere between the 11th and 13th Centuries. The Royal Navy fishery protection squadron can follow its roots back to 1379.

And so it was that HMS Severn found herself in Dover to help the historic ports (five originally, including Dover, but they eventually grew in number to more than a dozen) launch a tourism campaign.

Key to that campaign is a promotional DVD. But popping into your local DVD store to pick up the first copy would be far too easy. No, a little 'stunt' was laid on in the Strait of Dover to launch the programme with HMS Severn at the hub.

The River-class warship was joined by Tudor historian Dr David Starkey – well known for his books and TV documentaries on Henry VIII and Elizabeth I – who accompanied Severn's boarding party as they raced across the waters to inspect the fishing vessel Roy's Boys.

There the boarders found a suspicious stash of DVDs, which was brought back to Severn along with the 'smugglers'.

Instead of being hauled before magistrates for their crime (the normal punishment facing fishermen who fall foul of Severn), the crew of Roy's Boys 'suffered' tea and sticks aboard the patrol ship.

All of this gave Dr Starkey a good – if unusual – insight into the work of the fishery squadron, which is at sea pretty much every day of the year ensuring that trawlermen stick to the rules.

"It was a real privilege to meet a top historian and learn so much about Henry VIII's role in forming today's Royal Navy," said Lt Chris L'Amie, Severn's navigator.

"The support provided by the Cinque Ports to the navy is not forgotten and the ship's company always enjoy visiting an area of such history."

Indeed, the Cinque Ports are often regarded as the progenitors of the Royal Navy – the Crown afforded the ports special rights and privileges as long as it might use their ships if needed.

Festivities continued once Severn arrived in Dover. The boarding party, plus a guard of honour from Severn, were greeted by Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn (or rather locals dressed up as them) and former Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral the Lord Boyce. Today the admiral is Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports; he was formally presented with the DVDs at an official launch in Dover Castle.

"As a member of the Royal Navy's oldest squadron, it's particularly fitting that Severn should be involved in a commemoration of the historic liaison between the Cinque Ports and the Navy," said Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Steve Moorehouse.

Severn knows Dover quite well – she's paid two visits to the gateway to the UK in the past four months. She's now resumed more normal fishery protection duties.

How we won the war

THE Navy's vital – and often misunderstood – role in the Great War comes under the spotlight in Portsmouth on October 10 with a talk hosted by the Society for Nautical Research (South).

Eric Grove, Professor of Naval History at Salford University, regular on TV documentaries and *Navy News*' expert book reviewer, will outline the RN's contribution to victory between 1914 and 1918 in 'The Shaft of the Spear'.

The talk at 2pm in the Royal Naval Club and Royal Albert Yacht Club in Pembroke Road, Old Portsmouth, is open to all although non-society members will be asked to pay £2.



● Not the Falklands – although the weather and stark terrain of north-west Scotland where Gloucester found herself during work-up aren't too dissimilar from the South Atlantic

G force goes south

IT'S been a busy few weeks for HMS Gloucester – a hometown visit, a Royal guest and the start of a six-month tour of duty all squeezed in.

The Fighting G's hectic spell began in the historic city with a very public show of support and affection by locals.

Although the destroyer can't sail up the Severn as far as Gloucester, she could at least dispatch half her ship's company and her Lynx (plus an RN/RM recruitment team).

The sailors spent the morning rattling tins around the city centre – good Gloucestershire folk gave generously to Help for Heroes (£777) and the RN Benevolent Fund (£110) – or handing over the proceeds of their fundraising efforts.

The destroyer's marathon team had collected £3,000 after taking part in various, er, marathons. The beneficiaries of their sweat and tears were the youngsters of the Spring Centre which helps children with disabilities and their families from across the county.

Meanwhile in the grounds of Gloucester Cathedral... With the tin-rattling done, the ship's company assembled for a formal inspection by the city's Lord Mayor (the 529th no less) Cllr Chris Witts, while the Band of the Army Air Corps provided suitable



● Lord Mayor of Gloucester Cllr Chris Witts chats with members of Gloucester's ship's company in front of the city's cathedral

nautical music including *Hearts of Oak* and the *Pirates of the Caribbean* theme (no, we don't know what it sounds like either...).

Events then moved indoors. The 140 sailors were joined by five times as many worshippers in the 900-year-old cathedral for evensong to bless the ship and all who sail in her during their impending South Atlantic deployment.

Among those praying for Gloucester's good fortune were 50 members of the Fighting G Association, Royal British Legion

and Royal Naval Association.

After all that rattling, singing and praying, the sailors were obviously a little hungry and thirsty, so they decamped to the King's School for an official reception and chance to chat with locals.

"It was a successful and enjoyable day and the ship's company can deploy encouraged by the knowledge that the people of Gloucester wish them well," said Lt Gareth Shrubsole, second Officer of the Watch.

Rather closer to the deployment departure date, the ship was visited

on home turf in Portsmouth by her sponsor, the Duchess who bears the name of destroyer and city and who launched the Fighting G 27 years ago.

She spent time chatting with the ship's company about the commitment they'd put in to bring the Type 42 out of refit ahead of the six-month deployment, during which time the destroyer will relieve her sister HMS Manchester, currently protecting the Falklands.

"My ship's company has put in a huge amount of effort and work for this deployment," said Cdr Iain Lower, Gloucester's CO.

"The varied tasks that we'll be required to undertake are of vital importance to the safety and security of the people in Britain's South Atlantic Territories as well as the UK's wider maritime interests."

As well as performing maritime security duties in the South Atlantic, Gloucester is serving as a (rather well armed) freighter.

The Falkland Islands Museum in Stanley wants to expand its display on the 1982 conflict which defines the archipelago in the eyes of many.

It is being loaned photographs and artefacts from the war by the Royal Naval Museum in Portsmouth, with the Fighting G acting as courier.

A Gulf in size

SO MUCH in demand is the good ship Kent that she's taken to the water twice these past few weeks.

Less than six months after a demanding deployment east of Suez, the men and women of HMS Kent are on a demanding deployment again... east of Suez.

Meanwhile, in the rather less challenging waters of Mote Park in Maidstone (although the ducks do get in the way...) a 36th-scale replica of the Type 23 frigate sailed for the first time.

To 'big Kent' first. She's bound for the tip of the Gulf, where she'll be until the tail end of the year.

After last year's varied Far East deployment – Kent visited China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Sri Lanka, and chased pirates around the Indian Ocean – the 2009 tour of duty will largely be fixed in a single location.

It will be Kent's task to safeguard Iraq's two oil platforms – a duty currently performed by the ship's Portsmouth sister HMS Richmond – which account for most of the country's wealth.

Although the majority of British forces have pulled out of Iraq, the RN's mission in the Gulf remains virtually unchanged – as does the codename, Operation Telic.

It still provides training for Iraq's Navy and Marines, courtesy of a dedicated team at Umm Qasr and RFA Cardigan Bay in coastal waters.

And it continues to patrol the Khawr Al Amaya and Al Basra oil platforms ensuring no-one threatens the mass of tankers loading their holds with the

output of Iraq's oil fields.

To that end, the good folk of Kent have spent the winter carrying out maintenance on the Type 23 frigate, then conducting training which will ready them specifically for Gulf operations (such as running boarding parties) as well as more typical exercises and evolutions (such as firing Seawolf missiles).

"My team has worked extremely hard to prepare for what is the RN's core business – deploying warships around the world," said CO Cdr Simon Hopper.

"Our role in Operation Telic is crucial to supporting the recovery of the Iraqi economy as well as promoting greater peace and stability in the region."

As for 'mini Kent', she underwent more than five hours of trials in a park lake ahead of her inaugural deployment – to navigate the Medway from Tonbridge to Maidstone (a good dozen miles) on July 11.

The scale replica of Kent (12ft long, 1½ft wide and powered by a couple of 12v electric motors) has been built by Cygnets Model Boat Club in Maidstone to celebrate their 50th anniversary.

She's been over a year in the making and her marathon sail will raise money for Demelza Hospice for children – which fittingly is also supported by the full-size Kent.

You can learn more about the model Kent at www.cygnetsmbc.com/hms_kent_project/index.html

● 'Mini Kent' undergoes trials in Mote Park, Maidstone

Picture: Paul Dengate



JACK OF ALL TRADES

IN THE latest instalment of an occasional series on the myriad jobs in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, S/Lt Alex Burn provides an insight into a day in the life of a YO (young officer) aboard HMS Monmouth.

YOUNG Officers are the most junior officers on board – we have left Britannia Royal Naval College but are yet to take our Fleet Boards, our final step before becoming fully commissioned.

This interim period is called Common Fleet Time (CFT); four months on board a warship working and living with the ship's company. Our aim is to witness, understand and partake in as many evolutions as possible.

After a quick breakfast it was up to the bridge to assist the Navigating Officer, taking bearings and maintaining look-out as we entered Plymouth Sound for a boat transfer.

We often help out with navigation as it is important for us to understand, and appreciate, the process behind how the ship manoeuvres and where she actually is. Ultimately Chris (the other YO on board) and I will be logistics officers, but it is important that we understand each department as we will need to work closely with everyone, whatever their specialisation.

After embarking our guests, the ship prepared for a Replenishment At Sea (RAS). I took this opportunity to assist the Seaman Specialists as they rigged the equipment for this difficult and complicated evolution.

I was hoping to take part in this manoeuvre partly because it's in the task book we have to complete, but also because I wanted to see what each piece of equipment did and why.

So when the Chief Bosun's Mate asked if I wanted to play an active role, I was more than happy to take him up on his offer and found myself with a spar, making sure one of the connecting lines stayed on the winch drum.

On completion of the RAS the ship went to Action Stations in preparation for a battle with FOST staff simulating battle damage to the ship in the form of fires and floods.

I joined a damage control patrol – searching every compartment in my section for damage after sustaining a hit from a missile and reporting it.

However, soon after finding a simulated flood I was drafted into helping shore up a hole in the ship's hull below the waterline. After hammering several soft wood wedges into a hole, I made it secure by constructing a more substantial timber structure – a 'proud and breast' – all under the watchful eye of the FOST staff and, with the water still 'rising'. We were successful in stemming the flood.

At the end of the day's FOST exercises it was back up to the bridge to help with the navigation for the return to the breakwater and another boat transfer.

I had just enough time to run an iron over a shirt and put a lick of polish on my shoes before the evening meal in the wardroom. It is often here that we hear the heads of departments' take on the day's events, how the exercises went, which parts of the ship performed particularly well and which need a bit of work.

A few 'dits' over coffee before we head down to our cabin to write up our experiences and fill in the relevant parts of our taskbooks before settling down in our racks.

Turn and

PRACTICE makes perfect.

If you look to your left you'll see the sailors and Royal Marines of Her Majesty's Ship Portland boarding a dhow in the Gulf of Aden.

And on your right you'll see them boarding and then destroying a pirate skiff as one more blow is struck against the brigands off Somalia.

This is the war against piracy in a nutshell. Scores of routine boardings and searches – and the one operation which says to every man and woman aboard: this is why we're here.

We might as well start with the exciting one. The flaming pyre pictured opposite was all that was left of a pirate skiff after the frigate intercepted ten suspected pirates off the Somali coast as June began.

Portland was conducting a security sweep of the Gulf of Aden, aided by a Spanish maritime patrol aircraft.

Both picked up a suspicious contact. Portland set a course to intercept.

At close range the warship found two suspicious vessels – a 'mother ship' skiff and a small motor boat – with ten men aboard.

She sent her Lynx aloft and, with the machine-gun and a sniper rifle – in the hands of a specially-trained Royal Marine – focused on the two skiffs, the ship's commando and RN boarding teams moved across in their RIBs.

They found – and seized – a substantial haul of piratical paraphernalia: grappling hooks, machine-guns, rocket-propelled grenades, other weapons and ammunition.

They also found that the small craft carried extra barrels of fuel to extend their range into the shipping lanes.

After Portland's boarding team had done its job, one of the skiffs was destroyed, the other sent on its way with the ten men...

Which may seem like a rather lenient

treatment for the suspected brigands.

But despite there being plenty aboard the craft to suggest their crews had been involved in – or were about to conduct – an act of piracy, there was insufficient evidence to directly link them with an attack.

So off they went – minus all their weaponry.

"We have once again demonstrated the Royal Navy – and Coalition's – commitment to keeping the sea lanes open and making these key waters safe for international trade," said Portland's CO Cdr Tim Henry.

Just a couple of days before, the Devonport-based warship and her 200-plus sailors and marines faced an almost identical scenario.

Portland was sent to check a fishing dhow requiring investigation.

"We usually conduct these types of boarding by boat but because of the sea state and size of this dhow, it was decided to fast rope on to the deck this time," said boarding officer Lt

Steve Patton.

And so the mixed party of Royals and sailors slithered down the rope on to the dhow from the Lynx, then carried out a systematic search and check of the dhow's documents.

And all was in order.

While it was a routine boarding (if you can call any boarding out here 'routine'), the RN is one of the few forces in the eclectic international force committed to anti-piracy which can carry out such manoeuvres.

Portland currently falls under the banner of Combined Task Force 151 – in early June comprising ships from Turkey, UK, the USA, South Korea, Singapore, Denmark and Japan – dedicated to counter-piracy operations around the Gulf of Aden/Horn of Africa.

151 is the latest addition to the 'numbers game', standing up only in January.

There are already naval task forces committed to security in the wider Indian Ocean (150), the central and southern Gulf (152) and in the northern Gulf

(158 – although it's just been renamed Iraqi Maritime so one less number to confuse the Navy News team...).

On the eve of her success, Portland was visited by 151's Commanding Officer, Turkey's Rear Admiral Caner Bener, who toured the ship and discussed the ongoing effort to draw a dragnet across Pirate Alley between Somalia and Yemen.

Like Portland, the admiral has been with the task force since its inception (although he wasn't in charge when it was formed). He was impressed with what he saw in Portland and thanked the ship's company for their continued support and hard work.

"We've contributed to the task force from the very start of its operations back in January and I've been impressed with how much has been achieved in such a short time," said Cdr Henry.

"The task force is at the heart of the international community's efforts to address the problem of piracy.



burn

"It's able to call on an ever-growing number of nations to provide assets and the coordination with other nations and groups operating in the area goes from strength to strength."

Cdre Tim Lowe, the senior Royal Navy officer east of Suez – officially Deputy Commander, Combined Maritime Forces based in Bahrain – agrees.

"This international collaboration cannot be understated and as more countries join the fight, we will continue to work together to help deter, disrupt and thwart criminal acts of piracy in the maritime environment," he added.

NOW Portland are understandably pretty chuffed with their recent success.

And talking of pretty... (*Quite possibly the most laboured link I've read in a long time – Ed.*)

Actually, more sweaty than pretty as the Portland Pretties found out in the Middle East heat.

Then again if you run three miles in temperatures in excess of 30°C, there's not really much you can do about it.

All the female members of Portland's ship's company – 32 sailors in all, collectively known as the Portland Pretties – decided to ignore the scorching heat of the Gulf of Aden and trot 22 times around the upper deck, three miles in all.

They did so to raise money for breast cancer research. And raise money they did – just shy of £3,000.

The Pretties set off at 7am – to avoid the worst of the Middle East temperatures – cheered on by almost all of their male shipmates (who also handed cups of water to the exhausted runners).

We say 'almost' because one, marine engineer officer Lt Cdr Kevin White, decided to don a dress (presumably not his own...) and join the ladies on their run.

He didn't post the fastest time – that honour fell to Logs Kesha Charles – but all the runners crossed the finishing line in under 40 minutes.

After all that exertion it was only right that the Pretties rested – courtesy of a flight deck barbecue and the ship's rock band Not Under Command blaring tunes across the Gulf of Aden into the night.

PORTLAND'S time on pirate patrol is now done.

After 194 days east of Suez, the frigate has finally left the troubled waters of the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean behind and headed for the Jordanian port of Aqaba (of Lawrence of Arabia fame) for some R&R.

That permitted some floating in the Dead Sea and some sightseeing at Petra, the ancient city carved into rock.

On leaving the Red Sea

port, the frigate handed over the brigand-bashing banner™ to the good ship Cumberland (which regular Navy News readers will remember was relieved by Portland on pirate duties at the end of last year. *Comme ci, comme ça...*).

And so another chapter in the life of Her Majesty's Ship Portland draws to a close.

But you cannot reach the end of a chapter without a suitable conclusion.

It is provided by Cdre Lowe, who sent the frigate a B&Z as she left his domain:

"HMS Portland's contributions to operations has been exemplified by professionalism and a positive approach that was clearly evident from the moment you arrived in theatre.

"Throughout your deployment you have maintained the highest standards to operate in all arenas and meet wide-ranging challenges from the tactical to the strategic.

"Be in no doubt that you leave the Middle East having achieved the aim in full and have done so whilst upholding the finest traditions of the Service."





OF ALL the units in the Royal Navy, 42 Commando has had the most extraordinary year.

"When their tale is told, you will learn quite what they got up to."

So spoke First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jonathon Band.

And when the story of their six months in Afghanistan is told, the images taken by one man will stand tall.

Among a myriad of images submitted for the 'Oscars' of the Royal Naval Photographic Branch – the Peregrine Trophy awards, those by LA(Phot) Gaz Faulkner of 42 Commando were judged to be the very finest of yet another 12 months of iconic photography.

'Iconic' was a word much in use at the awards ceremony in Action Stations in Portsmouth.

It's a word which sums up the defining image of war in Afghanistan. It's been used by us. It's been used by the world's media.

Type 'war' and 'Afghanistan' into Google Images, and it's the first one to pop up – Royals with bayonets fixed about to go into action as smoke from an explosion billows in the background.

The *Navy News* team never quite understood how the man behind the lens didn't pick up a gong for that image.

Two years down the line, justice has been done as LA Faulkner earned the coveted **Peregrine Trophy** for his second tour of duty in Afghanistan with 42 (see the images top and bottom left).

The trophy is awarded to the best photographic section across the RN – and the word section implies a team. So Gaz's triumph is all the more impressive. He is the only photographer in the 42 'section'.

His portfolio of six images of war and peace in Afghanistan were laid before recently-retired RN photographer Dizzy Desilva, Bette Lynch (no not that one) of Getty News Images, and the *Daily Telegraph's* picture editor Kim Scott-Clark.

The six pictures, they said, represented "an outstanding group of images".

They also represented just one per cent of the submissions for this year's competition – many of which, said the trio, would "compete for front page status in the national press".

One shot by LA(Phot) Steve Johncock certainly did. The Drake-based photographer's image of wounded Mne Mark Ormrod struggling across the parade ground at Bickleigh captures the sacrifices made by the Royals in Afghanistan – and their spirit.

"It is in a league of its own in capturing different emotions and stands up against any picture taken by the world's media," said the judges, who gave it the **Media Operations Award**.

For the man behind the camera, all credit should go to the commando.

"The photo is a tribute to Mark," said Steve. "A lesser person would have remained in the wheelchair. It captures in one picture the courage and determination we all know he has."

And maintaining the green beret theme, a triptych of black and white images of Royals exercising with HMS Bulwark earned the ship's photographer, LA(Phot) Shaun Barlow, the **Commandant General Royal Marines Portfolio prize** (see the main image, opposite).

After two years as **RN Photographer of the Year** (the first person to win twice), PO Sean Clee had to relinquish the title (and trophy) to LA(Phot) Owen King (see the applauding Chinese).

Owen has been in the branch five years and his images have regularly featured in these pages – in

particular his work with HMS Kent on her Far East deployment in 2008. That proved to be a fruitful trip. When he returned home he showed 100 of his best images to friends and family, who picked out half a dozen of the best. The judges evidently agreed with their selection. "It is awesome to win this – and I really can't believe it," he said.

"I wanted photographs which were punchy – looked a bit different – and I was lucky enough to deploy with HMS Kent to the Far East which was the best opportunity I've had in the Navy."

Having handed back one trophy, PO Clee collected another – the **Open** award for a gritty image of a battle-hardened commando holding some gleaming bullets.

45 Commando's LA(Phot) Nick Tryon takes the **Life Without Limits** award for a Royal popping his head out of tall grass and Gregg Macready of HMS Ark Royal won the **Maritime Prize** for a shot of the famous carrier in the Strait of Mull; the picture is all the more remarkable for having been taken in a sea boat bouncing along.

A montage poster of naval aircraft past, present and future earned LA(Phot) Billy Bunting of RNAS Yeovilton the **Digital Imaging Award**. LA(Phot) Des Wade of the Naval Strike Wing took the **Fixed Wing Aviation** title for the Chief of the Flight Deck on Illustrious shielding himself as a Harrier takes off. And lest we forget the rotary wing, LA(Phot) Alex Cave bagged the **Maritime Air Prize** for a Merlin winning a crewman aboard HMS Talent.

A psyched-up Royal Marine in the ring, as captured by LA(Phot) Pete Smith, was the **Sports Photograph of the Year**.

Capturing the burden of command, as borne by Cdr Rob Wilson as CO of HMS Somerset, on celluloid earned PO(Phot) Tam McDonald the **Navy News Prize** for the picture which most impressed our team.

Of the new breed of photographers passing through the school at Cosford, LA(Phot) Alex 'Knotty' Knott impressed the most. His portraits of a Pompey fan, wife beater and friends playing cards earned him the **Student Award**.

The Peregrines are also open to amateur photographers in the Service. AET Mark Connell of 815 NAS took the **Amateur of the Year** title for his work aboard HMS Argyll in very rough weather.

To accommodate the increasing use of moving images by the photographic branch, awards are now presented for the **Best Video** (to PO(Phot) Angie Pearce) and the **Best 'Rushes'** – raw unedited footage which can be used by the news media – to CPO Andy Gedge. Two senior BBC producers, Anthony Massey and Brenda Griffiths, assessed the footage.

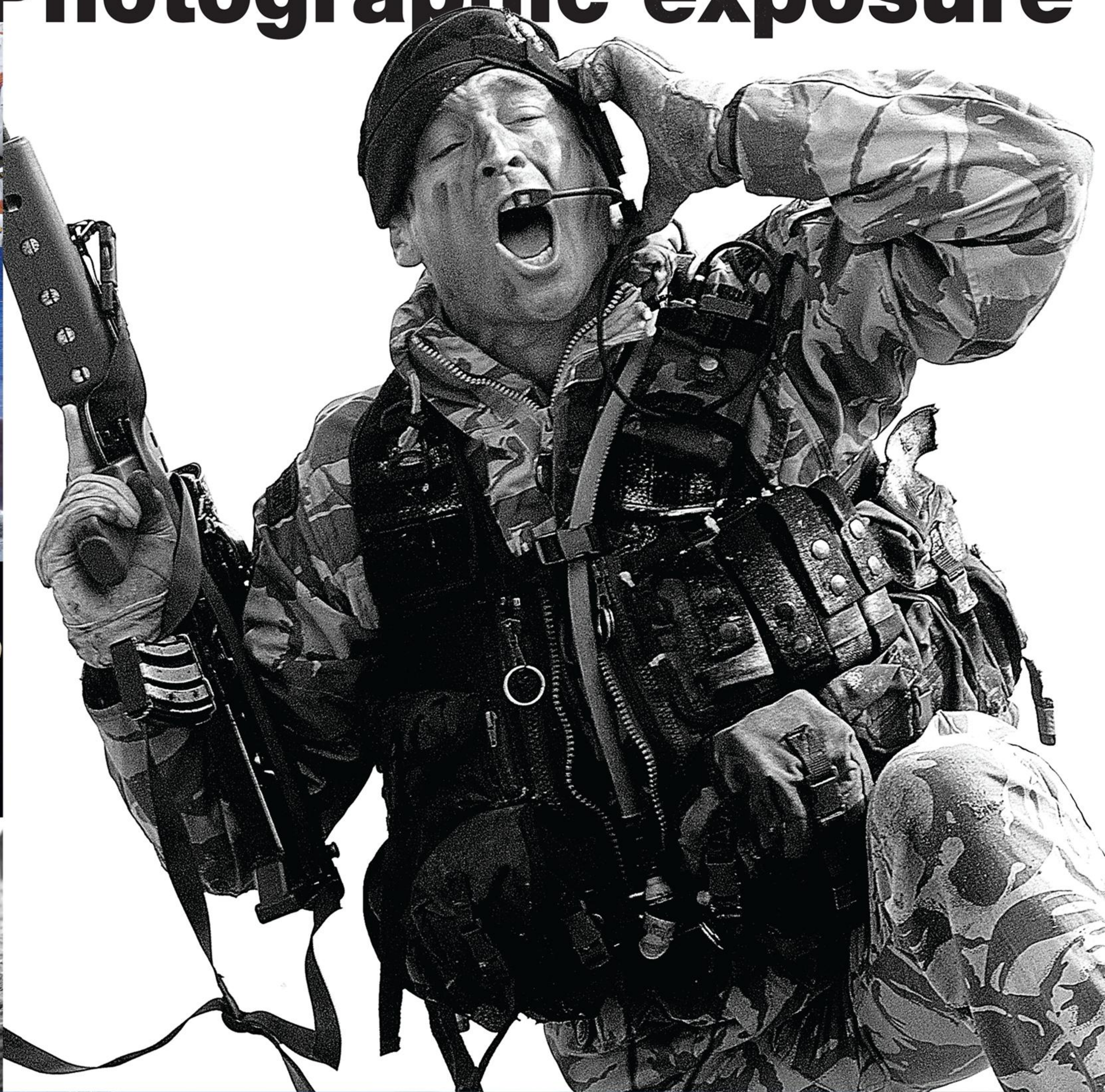
And finally, in memory of a hugely-popular photographer who was killed in a road accident last year, the **Mark Hipkin Award for Achievement** above and beyond the call of duty has been introduced. That award goes to CPO Nathan 'Scooby' Dua based on Whale Island. Scooby has been instrumental in revamping the photographic branch's computer systems to cope with the demands of the digital age – an enormous project which has devoured much of his spare time.

In all, said Admiral Band, there were photographs in the 2008 Peregrine portfolio which would "serve as iconic Royal Navy images for years".

He continued: "At times our Service doesn't always get the credit for what it does because so much of our work is out of sight, out of mind."

"Without the photographic branch, I do not know what we would have done these past three or four years – it has brought the Royal Navy to the public consciousness."

Photographic exposure



From A(25) to (Force) Z

GLIDING through becalmed seas off the Malay peninsula, this is the international task force mustered for Commonwealth war games.

Each year, the UK dispatches one vessel to the Far East to take part in Bersama Shield, a two-week exercise designed to test the abilities of Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore to work together.

Typically the RN's input is 'just' a frigate. And there was one there this year too – HMS Somerset.

She however, was rather dwarfed by helicopter carrier HMS Ocean and tanker RFA Wave Ruler.

The trio of British ships, plus the submarine-hunter Merlins of 820 NAS, based on Ocean, broke away from the Royal Navy's Taurus Far East amphibious task group to take part in the war games, which trace their roots to the Five-Power Defence Arrangement signed back in 1971 to provide for the co-ordinated defence of Singapore and Malaysia.

In essence, Bersama (joint) Shield is one long Thursday War – submarines, surface forces,

fighter-bombers, all are thrown at the task force over the exercise's fortnight.

"Modern global military operations are now normally carried out in coalitions with other nations – it's exercises such as this which allow us to develop our ability to operate with allies and partners," said Ocean's CO Capt Simon Kings, who was in charge of the five-power task group for the duration of Bersama Shield.

"This year's exercise has been exceedingly beneficial to all involved validating this successful and enduring long-term defensive arrangement."

From war imagined to war real. In the middle of the exercise, Her Majesty's Ships Ocean and Somerset came to rest at 3°33'36"N, 104°28'42"E – the site of the wreck of HMS Prince of Wales.

Here in December 1941 the flagship of Force Z, sent east by Churchill to thwart Japanese moves in South-east Asia, was mauled by enemy bombers.

The battleship and her accompanying battle-cruiser Repulse succumbed to the Japanese attack with the loss of 840 lives.

The wreath-laying ceremony over the leviathans' wreck sites has not been the only echo of the ill-

fated defence of the Malay peninsula in 1941-42 for the Taurus task group.

Sailors from Taurus flagship HMS Bulwark – which did not take part in Bersama Shield – paid their respects at Changi Museum and the former Allied PoW chapel, and held a service of remembrance at Kranji cemetery.

That sacred ground is the last resting place of 3,000 victims of the Japanese attack and occupation; a further 24,000 Servicemen and civilians who lost their lives during the war with Japan are honoured on walls of remembrance.

Before knuckling down to Bersama Shield, the British participants had enjoyed a two-week break in Singapore.

Actually, when we say 'break' we mean 'maintenance', 'public duties' and 'defence exhibition' (although, we believe, there was the odd opportunity to sample the nightlife in Clarke Quay and shopping in Orchard Road...).

The stopover at Sembawang handily fell during IMDEX Asia 2009 – a Far Eastern maritime defence exhibition held every year to keep navies and industry abreast of the latest nautical developments (think Farnborough Air Show, but

for ships... and not in Farnborough...).

More than 20 ships were open to the public during the show, including Bulwark and Ocean, plus their attached American destroyer, USS Mitscher.

The visit to Singapore also coincided with the 100th birthday of naval aviation.

WAFUs are, apparently, never ones to refuse an opportunity to celebrate – and they did so in style in the Far Eastern metropolis.

There can be few more impressive locations for a mess dinner than the world-famous Raffles Hotel (pictured below).

Dressed in whites, the officers of HM Ships Ocean and Somerset, RFA Wave Ruler and HMNZS Te Mana plus 815, 820 and 847 Naval Air Squadrons and 6 Squadron Royal New Zealand Air Force sat down to an evening of fine food, fine company and fine dits from a century of daring deeds by naval aviators.

No such celebration would have been complete without a hearty rendition of the A25 song – it takes its name from the (long-winded) form aircrew must complete if they have an accident – to bring the house down.

pictures: la(phot) bernie henesy, hms ocean



Out of the blue



IT'S the dark hours of June 6.

Overhead a bright moon etches the shapes of the sleeping men across the deck.

The landing craft is full with sprawling bodies, men resting in preparation for the morning's assault.

The dull glow of cigarettes is sheltered by cupped hands, men's low voices rumble in distracting chat, the reek of diesel taints the air.

Overhead the distant flicker of aircraft lights hint at the troops about to be dropped ashore.

H-hour is coming and right now is just a waiting game.

As first light breaks the first of the landing craft will hit the shore, launching their cargo of men and weapons into the expectant enemy.

But this isn't 1944. And this isn't the Channel.

This is 2009 and the South China Sea.

The men are Alpha Company, 40 Commando. Delta Company, 40 Commando, are already in the thick of battle. The 'enemies' are Charlie Company, 40 Commando. The shore is Brunei.

This moment hangs in the middle of a vast push of activity.

Traditionally there is an aspect of reverence about the dawn, the shore, the moment of transition from night to day, from sea to land.

Traditionally this is the realm that the men and women of the Naval service – the sailors, the airmen, the marines – rule.

As the boots of the Royal Marines plunge ashore through the foaming waves as the dawn light breaks, as the action of beach assault flames into life, this moment is the crux between months of planning and training and the final push for home.

Four months earlier the Royal Navy's Taurus Task Group set out to travel 6,500 miles to this distant shore.

Up to 12 ships and 3,300 people have planned, travelled, laboured to reach this goal.

Recent months have seen training in the river deltas of Bangladesh and the desert shores of Saudi Arabia.

The last week in the South China Sea has brought a deep survey ship close to shore to recce the shallow approaches.

The previous 24 hours have seen plans adapt as intelligence, technology and environment have driven changes. Marines have been briefed using maps laid out in Ocean's hangar with blue and green paper-towel, gaffer-tape and paper-plates.

The intricate clockwork of amphibious attack has been meticulously meshed together by every man and woman in Taurus 09 to bring these men to H-hour.

The dawn is coming, and once that cusp has been passed, the beach crossed, the future holds gunfire, jungle, riverine operations, helicopter assault and more in Exercise Commando Rajah.

The teeth of the cogs will continue to grind into the future as landing craft, ORCs, helicopters, assault ships, marines and matelots fight, fend and fix the complex gearwheels of shipborne assault.

And then the heavy ships will turn their noses towards home, gradually shedding and scattering their cargo of people, kit and vehicles to their next call of duty.

This is no ordinary deployment – it's the first time in 12 years that such a large task group has come this far east to exercise, and pushing into the Orient has opened the eyes of many on board.

To quote the commanding officer of 820 NAS and Ocean's Tailored Air Group, Cdr Jason Phillips: "India was the really turning point for many people. When we got to India it really was the Narnia wardrobe, we'd opened the door and come out somewhere entirely different."

New aspects have opened up to all the participants.

The hefty assault ships (the 'amphib heavies') are no seasoned veterans of this sea with water temperatures up to 35°C.

For many Marines of 42 Commando this is the first time they have trained in the jungle after the enduring dry and high challenges of landlocked Afghanistan.

Some airmen in Naval squadrons have had their first experiences of operating from ships.

Grey Merlins have turned from their traditional submarine hunting to become junglies carrying men and material from assault ship into the jungle's heart.

Survey ship Echo has moved into an unaccustomed task group bringing the pre-landing force team to carry out their stealthy assessments of the coastline's weaknesses.



● Alpha Company prepare for their jungle assault in Brunei



● 9ASRM landing craft from HMS Ocean waiting at the shore



● Exercise Commando Rajah drew the Marines from the beach into the jungles of Borneo



● HMS Echo in the South China Sea
Picture: Lt Lindsey Ashwood



Shallow-water experts from Fleet Diving Unit 2 have had their first taste of her as their home base, and their first experience of working as IED experts alongside the Gurkhas in Brunei's jungle depths.

The boat specialists of 539 ASRM, Ocean's 9ASRM and Bulwark's 4ASRM have forged together into two effective boat groups.

The new gunboat offshore raiding craft have proven their mettle in the testing grounds of Med, Gulf and Bornean coasts.

On board their flagship the two amphib leaders are in no doubt of the value of pushing ships, aircraft and people outside of their usual comfort zones.

Cdre Paul Bennett, Commander Amphibious Task Group, said: "There is no amphibious package. There's no one size fits all – that's the operation, that's the kit."

"We will always be doing other things around the world, and we will always deploy with a raft of different equipment, different staffs, and the multinational makeup is, of course, going to be different in every operation as well."

For Commando Rajah, the commodore is presiding over a task group featuring two of the great 'amphib heavies' Bulwark and Ocean, the Australian assault ship HMAS Manoora, and frigate Somerset, RFA Wave Ruler and the American ship USS Mitscher who are off guarding the flanks of the assault group, and survey ship Echo.

His air assets for jungle assault unusually include Merlin maritime patrol aircraft – operating for only the third time from HMS Ocean – and the CHF Lynx from 847 NAS, but not the classic 'jungly' Sea Kings of the Commando Helicopter Force.

For Col Martin Smith, the Marine heading up the land forces of 40 Cdo, bulked up with 539 ASRM, US Marines and the local Gurkha troops, the benefits are without doubt: "It's obvious that a Merlin

doesn't carry what a Sea King does and that it doesn't operate in quite the same way. But you've got to see this as an opportunity."

"And we've had an opportunity here to build an amphibious capability within 820 NAS that we didn't have before, and that might get used on operations one day in which case we'll be very glad we did it."

The commodore added: "820 were enthused by the opportunity to do something outside their core role of ASW and surface search. They're able to fly in the jungle. It's brilliant for their own individual training."

"As with the Marines, we train in the jungle for Afghanistan. That might be a difficult conceptual leap."

"But it helps 820 to be better pilots back in their main role. These are all great skills. What the pilots have done has been a really excellent performance."

This exercise highlights again and again the flexibility and adaptability demanded of all aspects of the Naval service, particularly the extreme complexity and range of its operations.

Of course, this range also offers up other arenas – the heat, the humidity, the jungle. The cold weather experts of the Royal Marines are pushing themselves and their kit into an increasingly infrequent training ground.

The Commander Land Forces said: "The jungle is a superb training area for the guys on the ground for a number of reasons."

"Firstly it is environmentally challenging – they need to learn to look after themselves. It's almost that their first duty is to consider looking after themselves before they think about taking on the enemy. Or your force can dissipate very rapidly through illness or injury."

"But also, because everything that happens in the jungle happens at a range between ten and 30 metres, very close, as compared to a 100 to 300 metres in most other environments, so individual skills

have to be developed to a very high standard."

"So challenging, yes, but actually superb training."

The nation of Brunei has welcomed its overseas invaders, continuing to support its strong historical links to the UK, and the British resident garrison 1 Rifles Gurkha Regiment have shared their jungle expertise with their marine counterparts.

Training has been varied, making use of the beaches, primary and secondary jungle with which the Devon-sized nation abounds.

The rivers have also been put to good use with the boat squadrons prowling the inland waterways on raids.

The Commando Rajah river raid was brought short by a sluice gate, where a mechanical engine failure had to be replaced by Marine 'hand-draulic' power, as the men of Alpha Company spent over four hours manually winching the sluice gate up to allow their boat group through.

But this sort of problem, rather than an artificial hindrance to the value of the exercise, is seen as a boon.

"You might actually be in that exact situation where the lock gatekeeper has run away and you have to take charge of it," said Col Smith.

"That sort of thing happens all the time, particularly in the sort of conflicts that we're engaged in now. Which can be characterised as war among the people."

"And that's probably quite an important lesson."

"We've spent an awful lot of time exercising in very isolated places and fighting in isolated places, we need to get used to the idea that the conflicts we are engaged in now are amongst the people and we don't always have the ability to operate in exactly the way that we would wish."

This means that the landing craft men have had to slow their craft to ensure they don't flood the shallow





fishing skiffs that are moored along the Bruneian rivers (or have to go back the next day to extract them out the bottom of the river, dry them out and restore them to their owners).

That the pilots of the Merlin helicopters have had to keep a wary eye out for corrugated roofs easily borne aloft by their powerful downdraught.

The senior commando officer added: "Every exercise has an element of artificiality to it. There's no real good answer to this, you work your way around it as best you can and you use your military experience to build in as much reality as you possibly can."

The heat and the humidity have impacted on both man and machinery, with ships' engines and cooling taxed by the ambient water and air temperatures.

On the river, the landing craft swelter in the bright sunshine, with makeshift canvas covers slung across to offer some shelter from the heat.

A luxury that isn't available to the boatmen on the open ORCs, whose exposed crew and troops are ideally poised for full 360° defiant gunfire but are hammered by the environment in which they work.

"I'm threaders, sarge," is quietly muttered by one coxswain after hours patrolling in midday heat.

But unstoppable the Royal Marines surge onwards and inwards once their sluice-gate foe is defeated into the jungle and towards the enemy waiting beyond.

Meanwhile it is the 847 Lynx and 820 Merlin that buzz down the river's course, moving troops, watching over the ground battle, and at the ready for a casualty call-out, whether real or scenario-driven.

The three AH7 Lynx and four HMA1 Merlin are the current thread of a shifting air group that has been under the command of Cdr Jason Phillips, CO of 820 NAS, throughout the Taurus deployment.

He said: "As a long-term grey

helicopter anti-submarine pinging man, to come on board Ocean for the first time and to operate with Mk 4 Sea Kings, Chinooks, the Mk 7 Lynx, so we've had the range of CHF and JHC aircraft from an area I've never really had any experience of before – it's great.

"Fly Navy 100 year it's brilliant that all the Fleet Air Arm squadrons of all the colours have got together, because we've had the grey helicopters with the Flights that are on Somerset and earlier with Argyll, and we also had an 857 aircraft from Culdrose, so we've had the whole range throughout.

"The only ones we've missed really have been the Search and Rescue Sea King Mk 5s, otherwise we have just about ticked the box for everything. So it's been fascinating. "I've operated with green very briefly before over ten years ago, so it's been fantastic to operate with them.

"Similarly with green with their extremely busy operational routine, for them to come back to their roots and operate at sea has been good for them."

For the Merlins themselves the early months of Taurus had seen them maintain their focus on their primary role of anti-submarine warfare, up to Singapore; but the opportunity to show off their versatility in other roles has been relished as the deployment has developed.

"To fly over the jungle offers a whole host of challenges – and creepy crawlies – so everyone's really looking forward to it," said Cdr Phillips.

"I've been flying for 20 years and I've flown in the vicinity of the jungle only once in that time."

He chuckled: "And I'm classic, 20 years of flying and I've proven that you can teach an old dog new tricks."

It's no secret that Taurus is about teaching new tricks to old dogs, or old tricks to new dogs.

On board survey ship HMS Echo,

her XO Lt Cdr Derek Rae admits: "Our core business is populating a database for years to come."

But he and his crew have played host to the marines of the pre-lending force, Royal Australian Navy personnel, and the shallow-water experts of Fleet Diving Unit 2.

He added: "These ships are designed to go out and operate on their own. So this is a good opportunity to work with a task group.

"One of the big issues is the work we usually do is miles from land. This exercise has been essential in preventing skill fade.

"It's brought the skill level back up so if this happened for real we wouldn't be feeling our way. If you don't practise these things you really are rusty when you get back."

But such has been the pace and range of activity on Taurus that rust is an unlikely prospect.

"The Royal Navy is one of the few navies of the world that operates globally on potentially a high level of operational intensity," said Cdre Bennett.

"And we've been able to prove that we can do that with the sort of hardware we've brought out with Taurus.

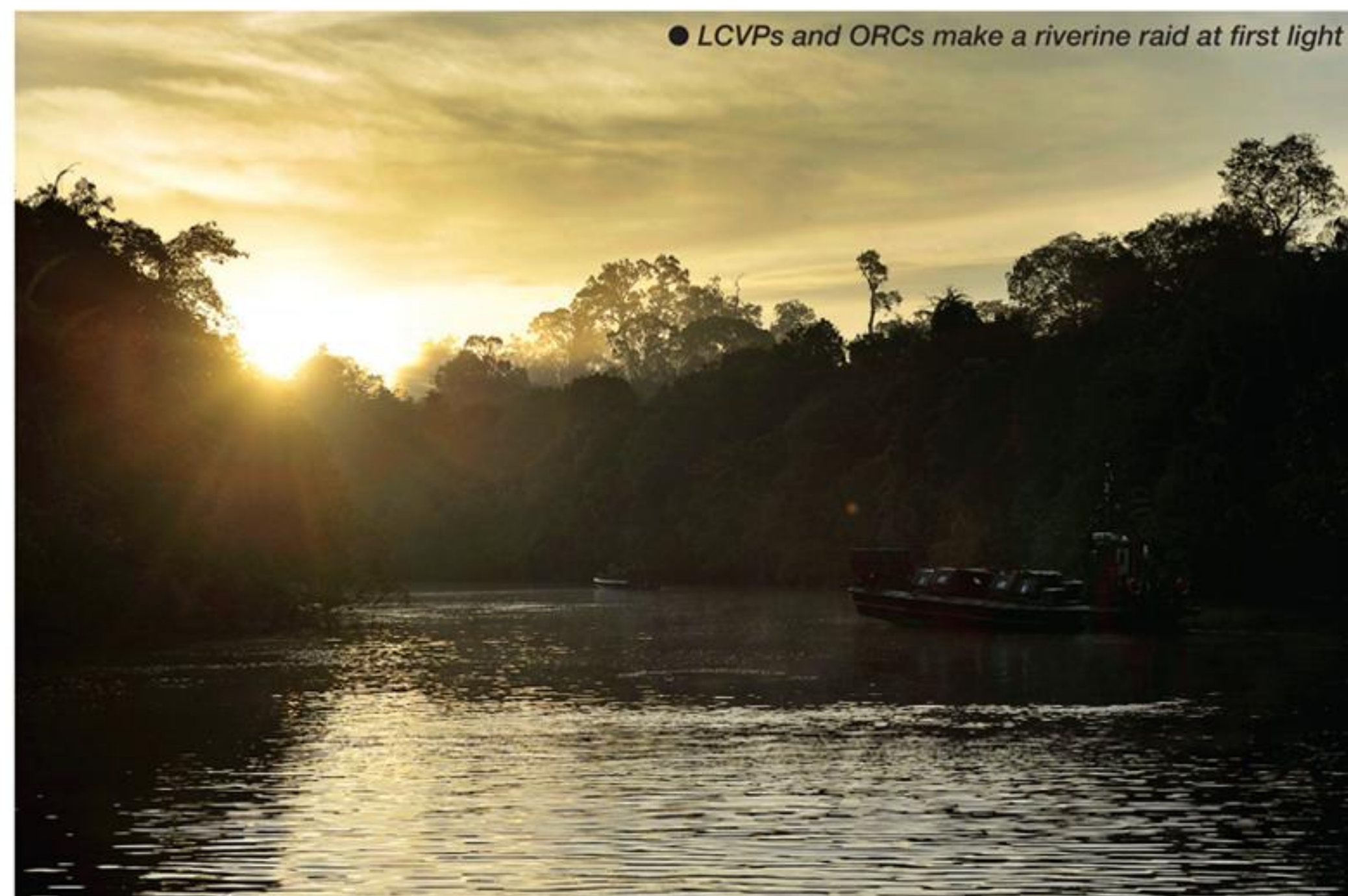
"We're proving it to ourselves, we're learning, and – regrettably – re-learning lessons sometimes, but nevertheless it's a hugely important activity to demonstrate to ourselves and our partners that we can do that.

"It's not straightforward, but what we've proved in Taurus is that the Royal Navy is absolutely able to do that because it has been a great success."

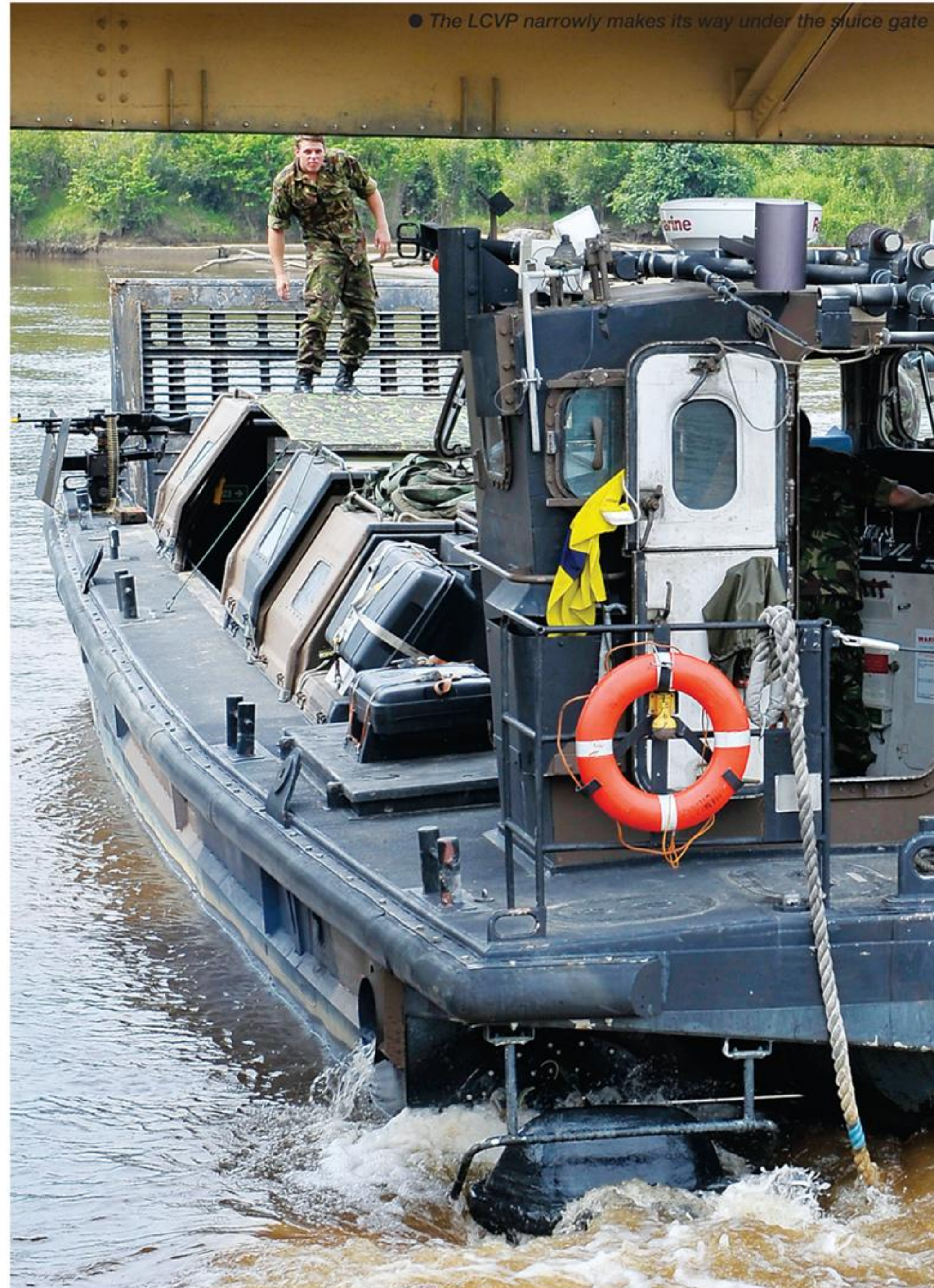
Col Smith concluded: "The joint Royal Navy-Royal Marines team is absolutely the spine of amphibious warfare. Two groups of people from arguably rather different backgrounds coming together to put a very complex operation together.

"And it doesn't happen by accident, it happens because we get the right training time with the right assets."

● LCVPs and ORCs make a riverine raid at first light



● The LCVP narrowly makes its way under the sluice gate



● 539 ASRM Offshore Raiding Craft on river patrol



● An 847 Lynx drops Delta Company into the jungle
Picture: LA(Phot) AJ Mcleod



Bikemen and Pikemen

BIKEMEN from the Maritime Warfare Centre in HMS Collingwood are going to rustle up a meal in return for a bed for the night when they cycle from John O'Groats to Land's End.

The doughty cyclists – Cdrs Richard Buckland and Gavin MacDougall, Lt Cdr David Iliffe, PO Bungy Edwards and Jeremy Walters of the MOD (pictured above) – are taking part in the ride to raise money for Help for Heroes.

Cdr Buckland said: "I am looking forward to this event and have been training really hard. We have been offered accommodation in a number of different military fire stations, which could prove to be interesting, and in return we have offered to cook an exotic meal for them."

He added: "We've had some fantastic offers of support from various businesses and local organisations."

See www.justgiving.com/gavinmacdougall to contribute.

Peddalling a bike is one way to get from John O'Groats to Land's End – hard work yes, but a popular challenge for charities.

Walking in 17th century kit while carrying an eight-foot pike is another...

Historian and re-enactment enthusiast Malcolm Cray didn't make things easy for himself when he decided it was time to do his bit for Help for Heroes.

The Chief Petty Officer, who left the Navy in May, decided to combine his passion for history

with a spot of fund-raising by walking from end to end of the country – dressed as a 17th-century pikeman in full armour.

Every time he kits up Malcolm adds another five stone, not to mention his half-size replica pike, (he felt the full 16 feet might prove a little impractical) complete with the H4H flag.

Walking without a back-up vehicle, Malcolm is getting by with a mixture of camping, B&Bs and a little bit of help from his friends in re-enactment groups, plus other well-wishers along the way who offer him food or a bed for the night.

He has already raised over £7,100 and more donations are coming in by the day. Malcolm, whose last job in the Navy was manager of the Type 23 Frigate simulator at the Maritime Warfare School, said: "I've enjoyed my career and been fortunate that I've never sustained an injury, even in the Gulf. Collecting for Help for Heroes is my way of acknowledging those who have."

Anyone intrigued by Malcolm's adventure can follow him via his blog, www.thecharitypikeman.blogspot.com.

There is still plenty of time to read all about it, because while many charity efforts are done and dusted between editions of *Navy News*, Malcolm does not expect to reach his destination before the end of this month (July) after a total of at least 71 days on the march, give or take a blister or two.



Commandos hatch the Chicks Challenge

TEAMS from as far afield as Liverpool and London travelled to Plymouth for a taste of everyday Marine life with 42 Commando at Bickleigh Barracks.

The intrepid volunteers were taking part in the CHICKS Commando Challenge Trophy to raise money for children who need a holiday.

Volunteers from 18 teams tried their skills at wall-climbing, tent-building, rowing, observation and laser rifles – a taste of everyday Marine training in fact – under the guidance of Major Paul Shergold and his men.

The event was sponsored by Foot Anstey Solicitors, and one of their teams, the aptly-named Going Commando, took the winning title.

The Chicks Commando Challenge was organised in aid of CHICKS (Country Holidays for Inner City Kids) which provides safe and carefree holidays in Devon and Cornwall for children who are unlikely otherwise to get a holiday.

The children come from a variety of backgrounds, some have been neglected, others live in care, and many have sole responsibility of caring for disabled or terminally ill relatives, with very little help or support.

The organisers hope to have raised more than £6,000 from the day. See the website www.chicks.org.uk for more details.

Scholarly application

STAMINA... grit... determination... discipline – all qualities in evidence when children from Gosport Junior School in Gosport visited the Collingwood Field Gun Team (and that was just the schoolchildren – Ed).

The pupils, aged ten and 11, approached the field gunners for help with their personal development scheme, which aims to develop leadership, teamwork, discipline and a healthy lifestyle.

They figured the field gun team would provide them with an insight into what it takes to be a field gunner, a role which captures all the qualities the children are hoping to achieve.

First the 18 pupils tried the low ropes course, to promote communication and leadership. Next up was the Sports and Recreation Centre, to discuss healthy lifestyle and undertake fitness training.

Finally the children watched the 12-Pounder Cup Competition on the parade ground, with Collingwood's A and B teams competing.

Lt Steve Ripley, the liaison officer for the visit, said: "The visit provided an opportunity for the Field Gun Crew to extend its links with the local community, as well as providing inspiration for future recruits."

And it's not just field gunners who've been helping their local schools get into shipshape order – trainees from Collingwood and Raleigh have been working hard as well.

First on the list was Little Shipmates Nursery, at Lee-on-Solent Community Centre, where sailors from the Phase 2 Training Group in Collingwood spent the day weeding the garden and painting fences.

Nursery supervisor Denise Robertson said: "I am extremely delighted that they are here to do this for us, this was not a nice area before, but it is wonderful what they have achieved."

Next on the list was Uplands Primary School, in Fareham, where groundsman Ken Walters asked for help with a spot of landscaping. The Phase 2 trainees moved around gravel and cleared the site to create a new picnic area.

Despite wind and driving rain, another group of Phase 2 trainees put their backs into re-landscaping the grounds of Peel Common Junior School, in Gosport, while the children were on holiday.

The youngsters returned to school to find their play and seating areas had been cleared and tidied up, shrubs and bushes pruned, and new wood chippings laid.

And another team from the Phase 2 group took time out of their busy training schedule to lend some hands to Siskin Infant School, in Gosport.

Their task was to help decorate and tidy up the courtyard and re-landscape an area which is to become the school's 'secret garden.'

WO Duncan Roberts, who was supervising the trainees, said: "The sailors have been working hard for four days in-between training for the Junior Leaders' Field Gun Competition."

"When the team finished at the school most of them spent the afternoon training for the event."

Trainees from Hawke Division at HMS Raleigh helped brighten up Antony Church of England Primary School near Torpoint, painting the corridors and toilets, and power-washing exterior walls.

Taking charge of the painting was AET George Salmon, 20, from Bethnal Green. A dab hand with a paintbrush, George worked as a shopfitter before joining the RN.

He said: "I think it's a great idea to come out and do something productive to help the local community. Most of the guys have had some experience of painting before and were keen to dig out and do a great job for the school."

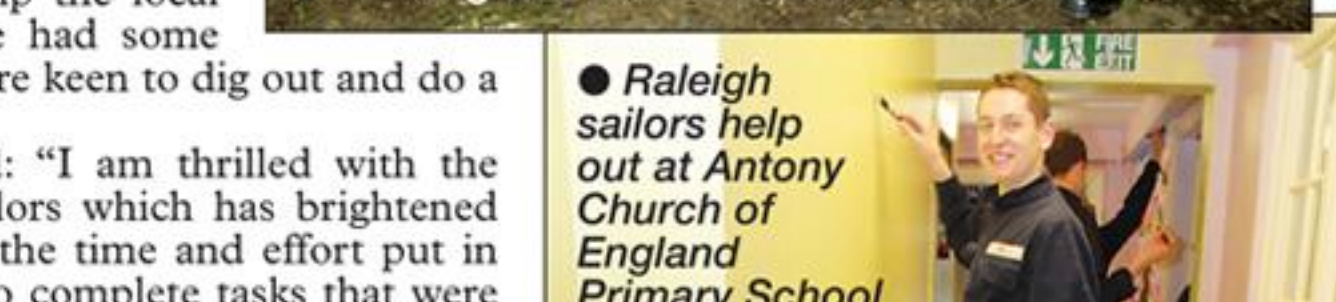
Head teacher Julie Simpson said: "I am thrilled with the work carried out by the trainee sailors which has brightened up the school brilliantly. Thanks to the time and effort put in by the trainees, we have been able to complete tasks that were scheduled for much later in the year."



● Helping hands at Siskin Infant School in Gosport



● Collingwood sailors at Little Shipmates Nursery



Ark's ticket to Ryde

IF YOU'RE on the Isle of Wight and spot about 30 walkers in fancy dress, don't worry, you're not seeing things. It's just the Marine Engineering Department from Ark Royal doing a spot of pre-deployment bonding – as you do.

The sailors set off from Ryde at the end of June to walk the 62-mile Coastal Path around the Isle of Wight, camping along the way and living off ration packs. The money they raise will be divided equally between Help For Heroes and Cancer Research.

The Officer in Charge of the walk, CPOET(ME) Paul Garrard, thought a 62-mile walk was the ideal way to help with command, leadership and management training.

As well as raising funds, it is an opportunity for the ME Dept to get to know each other before the Ark deploys for sea training before her regeneration as the nation's strike carrier at the end of the year.

Chatham helps unit

GENEROUS sailors from HMS Chatham have raised £1,250 for a high-dependency baby unit while during their intensive patrol in the Middle East.

The money was raised in a variety of traditional deployment entertainments, including horse-racing and a village fete. Three of the ship's company, LLogs(CS) Andrew White, CPO Andrew Robertson and LLogs(CS) John Roche, completed a marathon on a treadmill, rowing machine and exercise bike respectively – no mean feat in the oppressive heat of the Arabian Gulf.

Chatham's Commanding Officer, Cdr Simon Huntington, and members of the ship's company presented the money to the Children's High Dependency Unit of Plymouth's Derriford Hospital, where a delighted ward manager Charlotte Durrant said it would be used to create a parents' room for visiting family members.

CPO Ty Stock, whose son Nathanael is a previous patient of the unit, said: "It will be nice to have the parents' room – a quiet place to go whilst some of the treatments are given."

Lifting Clyde

DURING her deployment to the Falklands, Cpl Emma Redmayne met an islander called Christopher Johnson, an 18-year-old who suffers from cerebral palsy and needed to move to the UK to get the treatment he needs.

Christopher had to leave his mother behind in Stanley because of the high cost of living in the UK. Emma wanted to help, so asked LPT Danny Fallon if he knew a way to raise some money for Christopher.

Danny decided to research the weight of HMS Clyde with a view to bench-pressing the result as a combined team effort.

HMS Clyde (as *Navy News* readers probably know off the top of their heads) displaces a mighty 1,850 tonnes, but with a fit and well-motivated team which started at 12 people and grew to 16, the volunteers managed to bench press her weight within 18 hours.

Danny said: "It was a fantastic achievement by everyone, and most importantly, we managed to raise £1,400 for Scope, the charity for young people with cerebral palsy."

Cricket for Paul

A CRICKET match in memory of Paul McCann, the submariner who died in an accident in HMS Tireless, will be held on July 19 at Halesowen Cricket Club, Grange Road, Halesowen, West Midlands.

A select Halesowen XI will play against a Royal Navy team in aid of the Paul McCann Fund for Needy Children. The match has become an annual fixture since Paul died in 2007.

Paul grew up playing for Halesowen Cricket Club's youth teams and continued to play for senior teams when back from leave.

Previous years have seen Halesowen take the bragging rights, but the Navy are determined this year to change all that. The day will be a fun-packed event including the main cricket match, BBQ, tombola, Royal Navy photographic display, raffles, charity auction, evening entertainment, refreshments, surprise event and more.

Find out more at the website: www.fundforneedychildren.com

We know where Wally was

NOW don't expect the big screen adaptation of this superhero pairing just yet...

Wallyman and Wallywoman – more commonly known as AET David Robertshaw and his better half Kelly Wallis – pounded the sea front at Brighton, two out of more than 2,000 runners in costume in the Heroes 10K run.

This was, apparently, the biggest gathering of superheroes – yes, there really is a Guinness World Record for a gathering of 'Übermenschen'; it stood at 103 before the race.

But the real heroes were the beneficiaries of the race – in David and Kelly's case Help for Heroes.

"I went on Bavarian Surprise, saw the disabled skiers and thought: I want to do something for them," said 27-year-old David who serves in HMS Ark Royal. "We both enjoy running, so this event was the obvious choice. We did want to take ourselves too seriously, so Wallyman and Wallywoman it was."

Wallyman's special power is to run ten kilometers in 43 minutes; Wallywoman's is to complete the race a few seconds behind. Together, the pair collected £300 for H4H.

"It was really good fun – there was an excellent atmosphere," said David. "Everyone was cheering us along. Some of the runners really made an effort with their costumes – one guy painted himself all over as the Silver Surfer."

Flying high

THE Fly Navy Heritage Trust raised more than £40,000 at a Battle of the Atlantic Dinner in London where guests included the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Jonathon Band; Rear Admiral Sir Donald Gosling; a cross-section of serving Fleet Air Arm personnel and 21 veterans of the Battle of the Atlantic.

The speaker was the Swordfish pilot Lt Cdr Bruce Vibert, who gave a vivid account of his experiences.

The money raised will go towards supporting our naval aviation heritage.

Fine dining

INSTRUCTORS and trainees from HMS Raleigh's Defence Maritime Logistics School cooked and served up a five-course dinner in partnership with City College Plymouth and a host of celebrity chefs to raise nearly £20,000 for Help for Heroes.

From busk till dawn

JUST writing these pages is enough to make us Navy News reporters want a good sit-down sometimes – it's the manic energy involved in all that running, cycling, climbing, swimming, painting schools, digging gardens and general muscular activities in aid of good causes.

So it makes a nice change to go arty, and report on a very successful musical day in HMS Illustrious. The carrier took a break in her busy training period to take part in the first Musequality World Busk, raising over £700 for the charity Musequality.

What's Musequality, you might ask?

It's a new charity set up to take music projects to some of the poorest children in the developing world, giving them the chance to learn skills that offer them a route out of poverty, and away from the risks of drug culture, violence and crime.

Lusty has been in the Baltic Sea participating in a multinational exercise and operating the Harriers of the Naval Strike Wing (see page 3). A series of busking events were held during a planned lull in flying operations, allowing members of the ship's company to demonstrate their musical talents.

Events included members of the ship's company busking outside the NAAFI store; a 'hymnathon' organised by the ship's chaplain; a performance by the volunteer band and a 'Guitar Hero' challenge in the evening.

The day was organised by C/Sgt Ross Hunt, a member of the Royal Marines Band Service currently on attachment to the ship.

He said: "The ship's company really got into the event; I was amazed at how many talented musicians we have onboard and that they all took time out of their busy days to play some music and



● Not quite the right pipes: (in no particular order) Lt Cdr Anthony Hands, Lt Cdr Paul Burton, Cdr Martin Douglas, Lt Cdr Stuart Macdonald

Picture: Cpl D Parnham RAF

fundraise for this cause."

As Illustrious continued to operate as part of the exercise, crew members in their off-watch periods joined in the event.

Cdr Jim Macleod said: "Walking through the ship this morning you could hear the sound of clarinets playing jazz at the same time as the roar of a Harrier taking off."

A surprise appearance was also made by the 'Peruvian Players', who busked at various busy

locations around the ship with the motto "we play until you pay".

Commanding Officer Capt Ben Key said: "This event has really captured the imagination of the ship's company."

"We are here in the middle of a busy NATO exercise, but members of the crew have still found time during their off-watch periods to reveal their musical talents and raise money for a worthy cause."

Volunteers change pace for Life

DURING a break in the annual Royal Naval Volunteer Band Festival last year, two musicians from the Collingwood band got together and had a brainwave.

Their idea was to take part in this year's Tesco Race for Life in aid of Cancer Research.

So far so good. But rather than running the course, or walking it, they came up with a more novel idea – "Let's do it as a marching band!"

As volunteers from other bands rushed to join, the March for Life volunteer band soon numbered 50 musicians, plus a Corps of drums.

The players are drawn from the Nelson, Collingwood, Heron, Devonport and Royal Marines bands, as well as the Hampshire Police band and Hornsea band.

Volunteer bandie Anita Newman, who plays with the Nelson band, said: "Most people walk or run the course, so they will be walking or running around us this year."

She added: "Five kilometers – three miles – may not sound a long way to run or walk, but it's a very long march for a band and we will be playing all the way."

If you're in Portsmouth on Sunday July 19 and want to see the band in action, March for Life starts on Southsea Common at 1100.

See the webpage at www.raceforlifesponsorsome.org/marchforlifeband for more details.



● The Bandies on Bikes

...and they stopped playing to cycle

...AND IN case any Marine bandmen and women read about Musequality and think we're saying musicians aren't fighting fit – read on.

A team of 15 Royal Marines musicians – quickly dubbed the Bandies on Bikes – arrived at HMS Raleigh to a fanfare welcome after their 390-miles ride from Deal to Torpoint, pedalling an average of 75 miles a day.

The ride should raise nearly £30,000 in memory of two colleagues who died last year, Maj John Kelly and Band Cpl Andy Thomson, who were both members of the Royal Marines Band based at Lympstone.

Maj Kelly died aged 46 from a rare neurological disease and Band Cpl Thomson, 34, died of skin cancer.

Andy Thomson's wife, Cathy, also a Band Corporal, welcomed the bandies as they arrived at HMS Raleigh. She said: "Andy would have been overwhelmed to think that so many people have trained and organised this in

honour of his name.

"He would have been the first to do it, especially as it is raising so much money for three such worthwhile charities."

Among the riders was C/Sgt Mark Phillips, Andy's brother-in-law, who currently serves as the Volunteer Band Instructor at HMS Drake.

The core team included five musicians from the Plymouth-based band, and was joined by up to five other bandies each day.

Maj Kelly's daughter, Jade, joined the group to cycle the first leg and his brother took to the saddle for the third day of the challenge, from Portsmouth to Poole.

The money raised will go towards three charities – the Deal Bandstand Memorial Trust; chosen by Major Kelly's wife, Wendy; St Luke's Hospice in Plymouth, where Andy Thomson died, selected by Cathy, and the Royal Marines Benevolent Fund, which supports Marines injured or killed on operations and their families.



● Lt Sharon Brown and her horse Lord Shannoy

Picture: Peter Cox Photography www.petercox-photography.com

Lord's a-leaping

IT'S USUALLY our Army friends who like to take part in equine activities, so it's always satisfying when a Navy team sweeps the board – especially when it's on Army turf.

The Help for Heroes Charity Horse Show was held at Thorney Island, near Emsworth, home of 47 and 12 Regiment Royal Artillery Barracks, but it was Navy rider Lt Sharon Brown who carried the day.

Sharon, who is based at Headquarters Naval Command, won first and second in the show-jumping classes on Lord Shannoy, the horse she bred and reared from foalhood.



Ian's feet of endurance

IF YOU wanted proof that Navy divers don't really have webbed feet, check out this picture (above). The bandaged toes belong to diving instructor Ian Fleming, from the Defence Diving School in Portsmouth.

And the sore feet are the price he paid for taking part in Project 65, the 65-mile challenge run from Dorset to Normandy in commemoration of D-Day.

CPO Fleming was the only RN runner in a mostly-Army field. He said: "I met some fantastic people along the way and had a great bit of banter with the Army lads."

"The reception when we arrived at Pegasus Bridge was fantastic and made all the pain worthwhile."

To date Ian (pictured below in case you can't recognise him by feet alone) has raised £2,500 in support of wounded veterans, and hopes to break £3,000 when all his promised monies come in.





The barn identity

I ENJOYED reading your article about the barn owl that landed on the fishery protection vessel HMS Severn (*Navy News*, June).

The D-Boats Association mascots are two barn owls called Nelson and Emma, and live in an aviary at Marshland Maritime Museum in Clenchwarton.

In March this year we were pleased to see that Emma had laid and was sitting on five eggs. Good, we thought, new members for the D-Boats without trying.

The only trouble was that 14 days later we found out that Nelson had laid and was sitting on two eggs. That means that Nelson is no longer Nelson and we now call him/her Kiss Me Hardy.

I am also pleased to tell you that Marshland Maritime Museum has now doubled in size and can take 40 people at any one time.

If you'd like to visit, contact us on 01553 765530 or email dboats@tiscali.co.uk

– Mike Smith, Marshland Maritime Museum

We stood up with Bernard

I DON'T know where Bernard Hallas was sitting in the Royal Albert Hall for the Mountbatten Festival of Music concert in February (*Comment*, March) but I can confirm that over a dozen ex-Marines from the Blackpool branch of the Royal Marines Association all stood up for the *Regimental March*.

– Ray Saunders, Blackpool, Lancs

Fantastic in plastic



I WISH to take you to task over your views as expressed in the editorial (June) about the new Armed Forces action figures (pictured left).

As an ex-RN diver, I take exception to these remarks, for too long the CD (Mine Warfare) branch of the RN has been swept under the carpet as second-class citizens.

OK, due to the very name of the branch most of their hazardous work goes on unseen.

This is an elite branch of the RN whose training is very rigorous with a drop-out rate similar to that of the SAS. They are underwater bomb disposal personnel who every time they go to work are put in harm's way, in time of war and peace.

Is it so soon forgotten the images of those young men during the Falklands War sitting on top of bombs, out of the water that were dropped on to HMS Argonaut (and other ships) and landed up in the magazine without exploding to be rendered safe and given to Davey Jones?

All of this information can be found in the excellent book *Diver*, written by one who was there, Tony Groom.

The divers were highly recommended by Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, and many medal recommendations made on behalf of these divers, again not all medals were received by the divers.

So tell me, what is Jack if not a Navy diver?

– Christopher Roddis, ex RN

Illustrious' sad toll

I HAVE only just read the February edition with its item *Three Bells sound for Illustrious*. During my war service I was on board *Illustrious* during her Far Eastern tour.

There were two events where the ship was damaged. The first was the more serious one during which, I have been told, 20-odd lives were lost.

I was not on board at the time because I was an observer in an Avenger diving through the balloon barrage over Palembang.

On return I was told that a Japanese aircraft had flown down the flight deck.

I did not hear of the aircraft doing any damage, however, a destroyer of the escort – I think it was HMS *Euryalus* – was firing at the aircraft but did not stop firing as the aircraft passed behind the island. I leave you to visualise the damage that was done. Did I hear you mutter "friendly fire"?

The second incident was a true kamikaze. Fortunately, the aircraft was hit by 'AA' fire and was out of control and only hit the housing of a radar aerial and fell into the sea. I was on board on that occasion but did not hear anything.

I presume that the least said about the first incident the better the authorities are pleased.

– Walter Barnard, Solihull



● The guard of honour from HMS *Illustrious* stands outside St Paul's Cathedral following the centennial commemoration of naval aviation

Picture: PO(Phot) Christine Wood, HMS *Illustrious*

Rename that tune

JACKPOT!



AS OF this month we're awarding a £25 Amazon voucher to the letter which amuses, impresses or enlightens us the most. We thought Jackpot sounded rather more appropriate than 'star letter' or 'prize letter'. Anyway, this month we've been amused...

DURING the service of thanksgiving for the centenary of naval aviation in St Paul's Cathedral, I was struck by the appropriateness of the words of the first verse of the National Anthem, both for the Royal Navy and, in particular, the Fleet Air Arm.

In seven short lines are the names of three aircraft carriers – HM Ships *Queen*, *Victorious* and *Glorious* – and one destroyer, HMS *Noble*.

Mentioning this to a former petty officer aircrewman, in the pew behind, he ventured a version replacing *happy* (sotto voce) with another aircraft carrier name, to give the nautically sonorous:

"Send her *Victorious*, *Hermes* and *Glorious*...."

Marvellous! The National Anthem should indeed have found a place in the excellent Fleet Air Arm songbook.

Naval aviation is a real boon in this uncertain world, so let us now look forward to sending Her Majesty the tremendous new carriers HMS *Queen Elizabeth* and HMS *Prince of Wales*, which will enable this country to deploy offensive air power with flexibility and at a time and place of our choosing.

It is hard to resist thinking how pleasing it is that those serving in that younger flying service find themselves, from time to time, singing out the names of aircraft carriers being sent to Her Majesty!

The RAF should take note.

– Lt Cdr Lester May (retd), Camden Town, London

And talking of word play...

"ALL OF US are *As*tute enough to realise that all politicians are *Art*ful at an *Ambush* of us, the general public, especially in these *Turbulent* times.

"As we know, their *Audacious* plans are never *Superb*, and thankfully we have a *Trenchant* *Sovereign* who carries a *Sceptre* and she is a *Splendid* example with *Talent* and her work is *Tireless* for our country, long may she reign.

"Never more so since *Trafalgar* do we have to be *Swift&Sure* she remains on the throne in *Triumph* or else life will be ever more *Spartan* – unless you live in *Torbay*."

This little dit was started whilst playing with submarine names with a friend, and I share it with *Navy News* readers in the light-hearted manner that I put it together.

– Terry Hall, (former submariner) Ilkeston, Derbyshire



● A British nuclear bomb detonates during one of the Christmas Island tests

Positive nuclear reaction

FOR THE 22,000 men stationed in the Pacific Islands during the nuclear tests in the 1950s – bringing Britain into the nuclear arms club, stabilising the nuclear threat to Britain and the world – our presence achieved what the British Government wanted at the time and have since stabilised the nuclear era from that time until present day.

The judgement given by Lord Justice David Foskett, at the High Court in London on Friday June 5 2009, is the opening of a door to justice, showing recognition to the veterans of the nuclear tests and what they have been fighting for, for the last 25 years.

It's absolutely brilliant news we've waited a long time for this. I'm just sorry that a lot of my friends and colleagues, who witnessed the same events as I in the 1950s, did not survive long enough to see this day.

We are now hoping the Government will meet us across a table, rather than

dragging it on through the courts. But make no mistake; this is a landmark victory for veterans.

We hope that the powers that be do not force us into a long protracted litigation but resolve this out of court before more of the veterans have passed away as have many since the court case first started three years ago.

The British Nuclear Test Veterans' Association have raised money to commemorate a memorial at Alrewas to the veterans of the countries taking part in the nuclear and atomic tests.

There is also a memorial to the personnel who have died and been killed in action from the end of World War 2 to the present day.

But there are no nuclear tests veterans announced on its tablets. Admittedly, these veterans did not die on the battlefield, or from subsequent wounds at the time, but have suffered and died as a consequence of their

witnessing thermal nuclear weaponry at close quarters, and their deaths were long and protracted due to the ailments mostly of cancers, leukaemias, and other radiation-linked illnesses.

Of the 22,000 men who were deployed for the 1950s tests we estimate 18,000 of these men have already died, many as young as 40 and 50 years old, leaving behind many inherent diseases for their offspring to pass down the genetic line.

These veterans have all been members of the Armed Forces under the badge of Combined Operations and no matter how they died, they died from consequential service to their countries.

It is a dishonour not to mention them on a memorial and I would like to see their names on a scroll of honour to dignify their memories for history.

– Douglas Hern, Litigation Secretary, British Nuclear Test Veterans' Association, Spalding, Lincs

opinion

COMMAND is lonely, but it has its compensations.

Just as the former US President George Bush famously remarked that he wasn't going to eat any more broccoli, the Commanding Officer of HMS *Bulwark* has apparently banned sprouts from his ship.

"They are the devil's vegetable and the only thing I do not like," said Capt Wayne Keble.

Whether Capt Keble has banned them from the entire ship or just the captain's table has been a matter of debate, but it's a fair bet he has a strong body of public support, especially from small boys and husbands urged into healthy eating.

The views on sprouts expressed in *Navy News* do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Defence

In fact defence of the small green vegetables has been remarkably subdued – if there is such a thing as the Brussels Sprout Marketing Board it has kept very quiet.

Of course it's right to encourage a ship's company to eat healthy food, but the 'five portions a day' messages can become a little earnest.

The sprouts story proved the Navy still has an independent cast of mind, plus a sense of humour.

It got the major *Taurus* 09 deployment into the pages of most national newspapers (and a good few international ones) plus various television shows – quite an achievement in itself.



NAVY NEWS

Leviathan Block, HMS *Nelson*, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

July 2009 no.660: 55th year

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CLASSIC JACK

BY TUGG



The last clasp

I WOULD like to introduce myself as perhaps the other officer who has been awarded the clasp to the Long Service and Good Conduct medal (*Scarce Glory* p18, June)

Like Lt Cdr Steve Henaghan I joined the Navy in September 1977, as a Junior Electrical Mechanic. I was promoted to Lt (E(TM)) in May 2001, and received the clasp last year.

To help with the mystery, I do not recall being on the same Senior Upper Yardmen course as Lt Cdr Henaghan – I would need dates to be sure – which means perhaps there are more of us!

I will be here till November 2010, when (unfortunately) I have to retire upon reaching the age of 50.

– Lt Dave Bartholomew RN, SAR (H) Training Support Officer

Was it Sheff?

BEFORE I joined the Navy in 1962, I lived in Clacton-on-Sea and vividly remember a visit to the town by a warship.

I can picture the ship even now but I don't know the name – I believe it was HMS Sheffield.

I would be immensely grateful if anyone who may have served on her can help me identify her.

– David Dibben, ex RO2(T), Hornchurch, Essex



● The Union Jack – the correct way up – is lowered at sunset aboard HMS Nottingham
Picture: LA(Phot) Jon Hamlet

This way up...

LT CDR James Parkin raises an important point in his letter *Whatever happened to naval standards* (June).

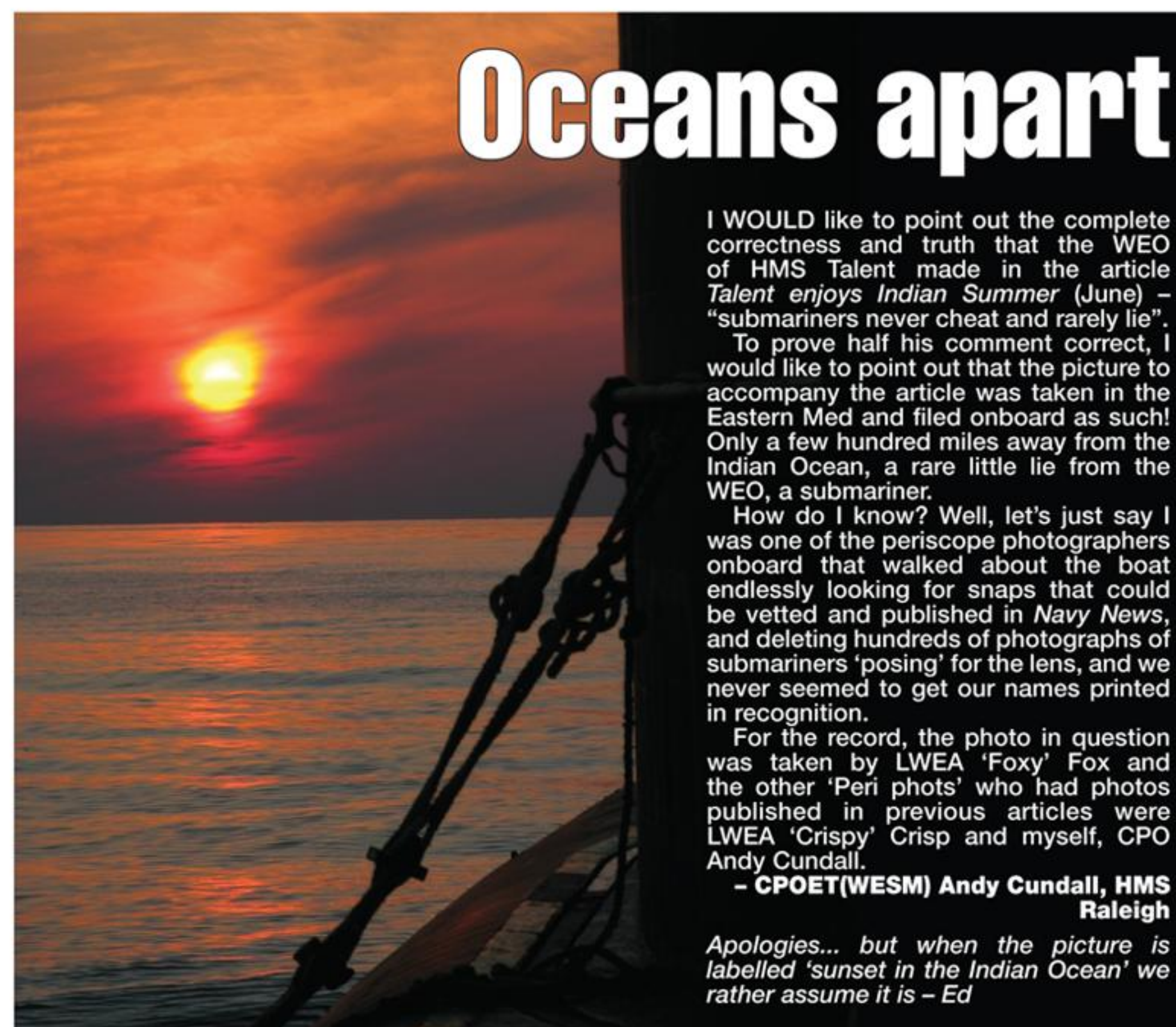
It is a depressing fact that so very many of our citizens have no idea which way up to fly their national flag. This problem is endemic even to the highest reaches of government and it is completely disgraceful.

More to the point, flying the national flag upside-down is a

gross insult to the men and women in uniform fighting under that flag to secure our safety.

Of course children are not taught anything about their national symbols and that is partly to blame, but it is not an excuse. The Flag Institute constantly battles against this appalling ignorance.

– Capt Malcolm Farrow (RN, retd) President of the Flag Institute, London



Oceans apart

I WOULD like to point out the complete correctness and truth that the WEO of HMS Talent made in the article *Talent enjoys Indian Summer* (June) – “submariners never cheat and rarely lie”.

To prove half his comment correct, I would like to point out that the picture to accompany the article was taken in the Eastern Med and filed onboard as such! Only a few hundred miles away from the Indian Ocean, a rare little lie from the WEO, a submariner.

How do I know? Well, let's just say I was one of the periscope photographers onboard that walked about the boat endlessly looking for snaps that could be vetted and published in *Navy News*, and deleting hundreds of photographs of submariners ‘posing’ for the lens, and we never seemed to get our names printed in recognition.

For the record, the photo in question was taken by LWEA ‘Foxy’ Fox and the other ‘Peri photos’ who had photos published in previous articles were LWEA ‘Crispy’ Crisp and myself, CPO Andy Cundall.

– CPOET(WESM) Andy Cundall, HMS Raleigh

Apologies... but when the picture is labelled ‘sunset in the Indian Ocean’ we rather assume it is – Ed

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it.



Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in *Navy News*.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.

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Kabul's eye



WE DON'T often quote Lieutenant Colonel T E Lawrence – 'Lawrence of Arabia' – in these pages.

Even less frequently do we quote a chief clubz citing the inspirational leader.

But here acting **CPO(PTI) Dean Steer** (pictured above overseeing press-up drills), gives a unique insight not only into teaching physical training to cadets in the Afghan Army, but also life in this troubled land.

"CONSTANT conflict, harsh terrain and hardship may have moulded Afghans into courageous fighters; this does not mean that the task of creating a new army is an easy one.

Apart from the usual intake of young cadets, there's also a pool of combat veterans – almost all were guerrilla fighters in the past, but they'd never served in an organised, professional army loyal to the state.

The chaos of the 1990s also meant that military norms such as professional training, discipline and strong leadership were non-existent.

On top of that, historical and social factors such as a weak central government and ethnic rivalries have contributed to the arduous task of building the Afghan National Army.

But here goes...

PHYSICAL training has to be delivered with the help of interpreters who ensure the smooth delivery of instruction and mentoring.

And that adds a new twist to the instructor's delivery skills. It takes a little time to adjust to – although learning as many key words in Dari as possible has proved useful.

The setting for all this instruction is pretty impressive.

Sitting in a large dusty bowl surrounded by the remnants of what was once a Russian stronghold is the six-kilometre square training area. Gharib Ghar ('mountain') acts as the backdrop for a quite spectacular setting for military training.

The training area is used by thousands of cadets and security forces and could not be a more suitable choice for mentoring the ANA officers and teaching military tactics to cadets.

Why? Well, when the Russians made their final withdrawal, most of the military hardware was abandoned, leaving hundreds of tanks, support vehicles, helicopters and even a jet fighter.

The main role is to deliver instruction directly to the Afghan officers so that their trained strength can be effective and professional.

Physical training and command tasks are carried out throughout the 26-week training

cycle for each company; the 33 lessons include personal, advanced and combat fitness tests, command tasks and competitions – stretcher races, cross-country, assault courses and log runs.

New officer cadet companies are formed periodically. Hundreds of potential candidates converge on the training camp from all corners of Afghanistan to take part in a selection process.

Rigorous physical tests are carried out by the Afghan National Army and monitored by British teams. The numbers are then whittled down to provide an entry of approximately 140 men.

IT'S wise to take time to understand the cadets; the normal approach to PT in the UK does not work in Kabul.

A conscious effort has to be made to be warm and approachable and not jump to conclusions no matter what the situation.

Thoughts of changing a cadet's attitude towards physical training soon evaporate when you experience thermonuclear levels of frustrations at their aptitude.

Understanding their needs is very important; they respond well when lavished with praise for minor triumphs and the response will be instant and gratifying.

It is always best to resist the temptation to criticise failure, it will get you precisely nowhere. Grinning – as is their nature – makes them seem somewhat child-like; it is likened to being team leader at your local kindergarten.

Although overall their fitness is extremely good (mainly due to the luxury of being slight individuals who were born at altitude) the cadets sometimes lack team cohesion, natural leadership and that all-important grit.

This is something that we try to pass on to them via command tasks and team competitions. Although the cadets are keen, weak leadership from their officers can prove irritating.

Due to ethnic and tribal persuasion, position, status and power are all that matters to some trainees. Status is conferred by the size of the office, the number of personal staff and the speed of the staff car.

Afghan trainers sometimes love to exert ownership on anyone or anything.

Trying to teach, explain and demonstrate more productive and more positive approaches to doing business can be a constant challenge. Connecting with the Afghans is not always easy but they are often co-operative and forever smiling!

HAVING an understanding of the Afghan way of life will give you some hope of achieving some of the objectives; to lose sight of it could lead to your demise as a mentor and teacher.

Winning trust should be the first and only goal. Overweening self-belief has no place here – we are all visitors in a troubled land and our first duty is to listen.

We should not try to change their way of doing business. We are not here to pass judgment on their methods and whatever they do to achieve their aim must be respected for we are nothing more than guests.

Our standards are not their standards and coming to terms with that can take time to understand.

These zestful cadets embrace physical training with vigour. Competitions are taken very seriously – although it's often driven by an attempt to get 'one up' on rivals.

IT IS a unique challenge to be part of rebuilding the Afghan National Army. It's provided those of us here an insight to the culture and work ethics of the Afghan people.

There are always likely to be teething problems including cultural differences, misunderstanding brought on by different work ethics, language barriers and the average Afghan's ability to absorb and act on information.

That said, the Afghan people

A VERY QUICK OVERVIEW

Afghanistan has not had a national army since its fragmentation and subsequent disintegration after the collapse of the Soviet led regime in 1992.

A decade later American led coalition forces were charged with training, equipping and supporting the new Afghan National Army.

Situated on the outskirts of Kabul and surrounded by the Hindu Kush mountains lies Kabul Military Training Camp which has been in operation since November 2002.

And within its walls can be found Camp Alamo where coalition forces carry out and mentor all aspects of military training for the ANA.

Camp Alamo is controlled by American National Guard and houses coalition forces from UK, France, Romania and New Zealand. The UK Leadership Training Team (UKLTT) comprises 63 British personnel providing all aspects of officer and non-commissioned officer military training.

are extremely warm and accepting of our guidance and support.

Coalition forces will not be leaving Kabul Military Training Camp anytime soon – the plan is to swell the Afghan National Army from 70,000 to 134,000 by the end of 2010. By that time the mentoring role will turn into a monitoring programme for the Afghan 'mentees'.

Try to remember that the British Army has been around over 200 years, the Afghan National Army began officially just seven years ago.

It will take many more years of training the Afghan National Army before they can gain the manpower, experience and expertise required to stand alone to fight the Taliban and get on with the laborious task of rebuilding their country infrastructure.

As T E Lawrence once said: Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better they do it tolerably well than you do it perfectly. It is their war and you are here to help them, not win it for them. It is their country and your time is short."

● The Kabul branch of the AA found itself short of vehicles... Cadets haul a 4x4 as part of their physical training



● Afghan cadets – helped by a British PTI – haul a log with the Gharib Ghar in the background

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE - LONDONDERRY 2009

Pressing problems outlined by Admiral

THE Royal Navy's Principal Personnel Chief gave delegates a peek at the contents of his in-tray – and gave them an idea of the issues that keep him awake at night.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey, in his first address since being knighted, spoke of the pressures on manpower in the Navy, and went on to consider the strengths – and the odd weakness – of the RNA.

Reassuring delegates that he believed the Navy was “in cracking shape”, Sir Alan said that the Senior Service was some 800 people short of its 35,000 nominal capacity, but would reach full manning by April 2010.

But even at full manning there would still be headaches “because there would inevitably still be gaps where we lack the right specialist with the right background and the right experience to fill that hole,” he said.

In practice that translates into around 17 per cent gaps – one in six – and as these are kept as far as possible from the front line, in some HQ and support areas the gap becomes quite a bit greater.

Sir Alan said there were particular pinch points – around 20 in all – which “are debilitating” and require close management.

“The ones that cost me the most sleep at night at the moment are the shortfalls in submariners, aircrew, Royal Marines, principal warfare officers, leading seamen and divers,” he said.

“In five years, I hope those will be sorted out and that we continue to work at ways of identifying and then rectifying potential pinch-point shortfalls before they impact on the front line.”

On overall manning levels, Sir Alan had a stark message: “Looking more strategically, I personally think that 35,000 is not enough to do all the things that are asked of today's Navy and Marines.”

“If anything, we must argue for more.”

The Navy could do better in terms of recruiting more women and members of ethnic minorities, he stated, adding that there is a further dimension behind the pure numbers – the realm of quality, training, culture, ethos, grit and leadership, “the qualities that will allow the Royal Navy to win, rather than just to turn up, when it comes to the day of reckoning.”

Sir Alan said the RNA could help by spreading the good word in the “deep hinterlands”, and by demonstrating the ethos of both the Navy and RNA of patriotism, loyalty and comradeship.

And while debate was healthy within an organisation like the RNA, he added “once democratic decisions have been taken by those you have placed in positions of responsibility the time for argument, and fulfilment, and machination is over – or at least it should be.”

“Nothing is more unattractive to both members and putative members than continual bickering, and part of any survival strategy for this great association must be to be more attractive to those who could be in it but who are not.”

“I've got to say that sometimes the confrontational nature of some areas and branches of the RNA has not gone unnoticed in wider Naval circles, and this will undoubtedly hinder the closer integration that we are all seeking.”

“Remedial action for any decision which doesn't have your whole-hearted personal support can be implemented by the ballot box on the next occasion of an election. That is the British way.”

Sir Alan subsequently joined delegates at the civic reception, and at the (very enjoyable) post-conference party in the City Hotel

'Take a wider view for the general good'

THE NATIONAL President's address to conference this year contained a number of stark warnings.

Looking at both the association, and the Royal Navy which it supports, Admiral John McAnally laid his cards on the table.

“If, as your National President, I have concerns, these are mainly about segments of the association who want to play the game to local rules, acting in isolation and in some cases detrimentally to the best interests of the RNA as a whole,” he told delegates.

“I cannot stress too forcibly that the association is democratic, that the views of all are given equal weight and consideration, and that the forum for debate is at branch meetings, area meetings, National Council and this conference.”

“Declamatory and defamatory letters to the *Navy News* do not usefully contribute to moving the association forward, nor do venomous articles in area periodicals or slanders uttered at branch or area meetings.”

Admiral McAnally deplored the fact that HQ staff and officials had to put so much effort into “rescuing situations” which could cause serious problems.

“I suppose in some ways what I am asking is for us all to take a wider view of the association and to try to step outside our personal boxes and to look at the association in the round, and to contribute all we can to the general good of our RNA community,” he said.

“This doesn't mean stifling or restricting debate, not at all, but it does ask those with a grievance to act inside accepted and civilised behavioural guidelines in their dealings with others, and to use the established procedures and processes to argue their case.”

“It may be a longer way of doing it but it protects everyone in the association, and it is important to remember that we can't have it all our own way all the time – that's what democracy means.”

The President was equally frank about the state of the Royal Navy.

“I should start by emphasising that these views are my own – they've not been handed down to me by somebody else,” he said.

“Our Navy is facing a very difficult time.”

“Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, the present First Sea Lord, has been a forthright and charismatic champion of the Service he loves and has served so well for so long.”

“His successor, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, I think faces an almost perfect storm – a Government preoccupied with its own survival, probably the worst public finances in our entire national history, a defence programme underfunded by up to £2 billion a year, a savage and underfunded war in landlocked Afghanistan and an imminent defence review.”

“We therefore have to give him all the support we can.”

“This should include taking every opportunity we can to remedy ignorance of what the



● Standards are lowered at the war memorial in the Diamond, Londonderry, on the final day of Conference weekend

Picture: Nigel Huxtable

Navy does, what it is for and why it is so vital to our nation.”

Among his thoughts, Admiral McAnally offered:

■ The UK, as a maritime nation, relies on 95 per cent of everything coming in and going out travelling by sea – very soon including 70 per cent of our energy.

“What that means is that the lights could go out in, say, Birmingham if the chain of one liquefied natural gas carrier every 400 miles between here and the Middle East is broken, or interrupted,” he warned.

■ The extent of the Navy's contribution to Afghanistan is often overlooked – Royal Marines, air assets, medics, logistics and HQ staff, and augmentees by the shipload.

■ “But Afghanistan is not the template for the future,” he said.

“Indeed, much as I sympathise, as we all do, with its brave people, attempting to drag Afghanistan from a Middle Ages theocracy to be a 21st century democracy is, to my mind, frankly absurd.”

“We are where we are and we in the RNA have to support our Armed Forces, but the UK national interest only requires that Afghanistan should not present a threat to British security.”

“There is a limit to how much we can or should attempt to do good in the world, and I would not expect the campaign in Afghanistan as it now is to continue beyond the life of the next Parliament.”

■ Admiral McAnally continued: “The nuclear deterrent and the new aircraft carriers are the touchstone of whether or not the UK remains a significant power on the world scene.”

“It is ridiculous to talk about

the carriers at £3.9 billion being responsible for the crisis in the defence budget. They've been planned for over ten years.

■ “Both nuclear submarine and frigate numbers are at tipping points of critical mass and actually inhibiting strategic choice, as when recently we had to gap Falklands protection and deterrence by diverting a frigate from the Atlantic Patrol South to anti-piracy off Somalia.”

■ “We need a Navy that is big enough to have a meaningful presence, whether to deter or defeat attacks, and versatile enough to operate across the entire spectrum of possible tasking – everything from search and rescue operations in the North Sea to focused intervention and beyond, and its support and training must not be hollowed out.”

In terms of domestic arrangements, S/M McAnally outlined to delegates the changes that had taken place since Dundee, including the rationalisation of processes through the establishment of management and finance and administration committees, both “empowered to get on with things rather than take every matter under the sun to National Council for decision.”

Two deaths particularly saddened members of the association – that of accountant and “staunch friend of many years” Paul Broom, and of 108-year-old veteran Bill Stone.

But there was the odd highlight too, he said, including the recruitment of S/M Henry Allingham, aged 113 and officially the oldest man in the world.

The President reported that the move of RNA HQ out of London had been “a resounding success”,

Plymouth bags 2011 conference

WITH just one branch motion on the agenda, a motion of urgency from Plymouth branch made it a straight contest between Hayling Island and Plymouth as venue for the 2011 conference.

S/M Mick Withington (Isle of Sheppey) had proposed the Mill Rythe holiday camp at Hayling as a potential prototype for future conferences, where everything is on one site, accommodation and parking is plentiful and the conference could be combined with the fun of a reunion, attracting more delegates and observers.

But delegates overwhelmingly backed S/M Arthur Gutteridge's counter-proposal which would see conference at Plymouth Guildhall.

“You know it makes sense,” he told his shipmates. “Come to the heart of a Royal Naval city for conference in 2011.”

Double success for No 4 Area

THE SWORD of Honour – the president's prize for the area which achieved the greatest increase in full members in 2008 – was taken by No 4 Area, who managed 62 new recruits.

And the same area also took the Tasker Bowl for achieving most Gift Aid returns.

The Briggs Dirk, for the branch of over 30 full members who managed the greatest increase in membership, was retained by Gosport, which added 20 new names to its books.

The Briggs Rose Bowl, for smaller branches, was won by Stroud, which added nine new full members to its roll.

In the overseas categories, Riyadh took the prize for large branches, while Eastern Cyprus was the winner in the small branch section.

■ More from conference next month

LORD'S
THE HOME OF CRICKET

Royal Navy v The Army
Inter-Services Festival Competition

Lord's Cricket Ground
Tuesday 6th August 2009
Ground opens 10am
Play commences 11am

Tickets
Adults: £12 Under 16 and Over 65: £6
Available in advance from 01252 334415
or on the day at the ground

Inter-Services Competition Matches at Aldershot
Monday, 3rd August 2009 – Army v RAF
Tuesday, 4th August 2009 – RAF v Royal Navy

Supporting independent living for our ex-Service community



Supporting Those Who Have Served

Life can be difficult after leaving the Services, whatever age you are.

SVR is here to support ex-Service men and women who are homeless or in need. Every year we provide high quality en-suite accommodation and meals for over 300 veterans in our residences in Dundee and Edinburgh. Dignity, privacy and respect for our residents are our principle objectives.

Do you know someone who may need our support?

For more information about the work of SVR or to donate visit www.svronline.org or call 0131 556 0091

Scottish Registered Charity No. SC015260

SVR
Scottish Veterans' Residences

Looking to the future

WITH just one motion to discuss on the agenda – and that being the venue for the 2011 conference (see top right) – it was decided to put two topics forward for consideration by the 83 delegates present at the City Hotel in Londonderry.

The first asked how relevant is conference, the second wondered if areas were operating at full capacity and should they have a broader role?

S/M Victor Allen (Chatham) was quickly on his feet to defend the relevance of conference, both for business and to get people together.

S/M Charles Claxton (Chelmsford) remembered the 1950s when there used to be 20 or more motions to address – the fact that there was only one in 2009 “to my mind indicates the members are happy with the way things are going,” he said.

S/M Paul Fitzgerald (Dartmouth) was more blunt

– conference “gives me the chance to get away from the missus for the weekend,” he declared.

S/M John Stewart (Saltash) sympathised (“He's very lucky – mine has come with me,” he observed) but also suggested that the date of conference could be moved out of the holiday season to help with costs and accommodation.

In terms of spreading the word, S/M Keith Ridley (St Neots) suggested even simple measures such as using the words ‘Royal Naval Association’ instead of the acronym ‘RNA’ would help – and he told shipmates to look at towns where they do not have a presence and “see what you can do.”

The much-anticipated raffle draw was this year aided by one of the youngest observers at any conference – ten-year-old Katie Morton, daughter of Helston delegate Joe Morton.



'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'

Colin has a passion for memorabilia from Dido

A PASSION for collecting items of memorabilia for the HMS Dido Association has become close to an obsession for Colin Bates.

Colin, who served in the Leander-class frigate in 1972, formed the HMS Dido Association in 2004, which now boasts more than 260 members.

Colin has scoured the papers and the internet for items of memorabilia, then expanded the association to encompass the World War 2 C-class cruiser.

His collection soon took over his Birmingham home, and his wife Deanna began to think she was living in a museum, as she had to contend with lighters, ashtrays, photographs and the like.

There was even an 8ft working remote-controlled copy of the wartime cruiser.

One of his prized possessions was the aft starboard deck plate, trodden by the feet of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother in 1947.

At this point it was felt that perhaps the collection would be better housed in a museum, and during discussions with the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust on the occasion of a Dido reunion it was decided to put the artefacts on show in the care of the Trust.

But still the items came in thick and fast – when members of the association committee were invited to Veterans Day in Bolton, the mayor showed them further memorabilia, including the cruiser's battle ensign, battle honours plate and ship's bell, and the frigate's honours board and ship's bell.

After long discussions with the local authority, the council decided that the items should join the other material at Chatham.

But still the obsession persists. Colin has now tracked down an anchor, a Bofors gun, bridge radar display, captain's chair and both telegraphs, all in a museum in New Zealand – the items were removed from the frigate, by then HMNZS Southland, before she was scrapped.

Bets are being taken on the chances of Colin getting these items for the Dido Association reunion in Gibraltar next year – that, of course, depends on how Deanna feels about having more bits and pieces of warship stored in her conservatory...

If you are interested in joining the association, contact Colin at colin@hms-dido.co.uk or see the website www.hms-dido.com. You can also call 0121 742 8188.

Admirals meet

DURING a recent visit by Vice Admiral John McAnally to Stourbridge and District branch, the National President found himself face-to-face with another vice admiral – none other than Lord Nelson.

Both admirals (one was, in fact, S/M Dave Weaver in impressive uniform and wig) were piped aboard by an extremely competent contingent of Sea Cadets from TS Sherbourne in Birmingham.

Beccles honours St George – and Anzacs



MEMBERS of Beccles branch held a joint celebration to mark both St George's Day and ANZAC Day, a national day of remembrance in Australia and New Zealand.

Their guest at the Beccles Conservative Club was Russell Jones, from New South Wales, who served with the RN, the RAN and the RNXS.

From 1979 to 1995 Russell was a skipper in the RNXS on patrol boats used in the defence of ports, harbours

● Branch president S/M Richard Ling, S/MS Len Manners and Russell Jones, and social secretary S/M Leo Whisstock

and anchorages during the Cold War, and patrolled waters both in the UK and abroad.

During his three-month visit to the UK Russell met up with his former chief engineer, Len Manners, and the two reminisced about former times at sea.

They even managed a nostalgic weekend in Portsmouth.

S/M Leo Whisstock, who organised the event said: "The event was a great success with the hall decorated in Australian and New Zealand flags as well as the English flag of St George."

"Having Russell and his wife with us for the lunch made it even more special."



● Further to a story in our April edition, pictured above is the HMS Jaguar plaque given to the City of Gloucester by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty in 1941 in recognition of the money raised during Warship Week. The plaque was in turn presented by the city to the Gloucester branch on the opening of their club, where it now has pride of place

Ganges group adds another flag officer

AROUND 350 members and guests attended the new-style annual reunion of the HMS Ganges Association at Sinah Warren Hotel, Hayling Island.

The Friday evening entertainment, of a very high standard, was provided by the hotel and supported by Shep Woolley and a SODS opera.

The surroundings were superb and the association was blessed

with fantastic weather – someone would seem to be keeping a special eye on things.

Saturday saw the ladies visit Chichester whilst the men got down to the business of the AGM.

The high-point was the announcement that Admiral Sir James Burnell-Nugent, recently-retired CINCfleet, had accepted the committee's invitation to become president of the association.

As a midshipman he had been on Ganges' books, and therefore qualified in his own right to belong to the association.

This was underlined by the fact that his father was Divisional Officer of Anson Division in the late 1930s.

Cdr Burnell-Nugent married the captain's daughter, and so added to the Ganges connection which made so many members very proud to have him on board.

But that wasn't all.

Boy Seaman 2nd Class Roy Clare (1966), now Rear Admiral Clare, former Director of the National Maritime Museum and recently appointed Chief Executive of the Department for Archives, Libraries and Museums, was elected vice president.

That brought the number of presidents of flag rank, all with Ganges connections, to three, including Boy Seaman 2nd Class Bob Williams (1959), now Cdre Williams.

The BBC also attended the reunion to record interviews of former button boys and other graduates of Shotley for an item in their *Living History* programme.

They interviewed the oldest member, George Hearn who joined Ganges in 1931, and his nozzler colleagues, Vic Cowling (1935) and Robert Mawson and Perky Mellow, both of 1936.

Saturday evening's gala dinner entailed plenty of pomp and circumstance, with the new president taking the salute at Colours and inspecting the standard bearers.

Sunday featured Church Parade, after which nearly 100 members and guests boarded coaches to visit Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

The 2010 reunion will be held at Alvaston, near Nantwich in Cheshire, with a provisional booking having been made for the weekend of April 23-26.

Farewell to Hanworth stalwart

HANWORTH branch is mourning the loss of "a big man with a big heart," S/M Keith Wild.

Branch chairman S/M Terry Lowden said: "Keith was a lovely man who has left a wife, daughter and son."

"He was generous, willing to help anyone who needed it."

"He loved the Hanworth RNA Club and organised many functions to raise money for his favourite charity, the RNLI."

"Farewell to a big, lovely man who went before his time."

"We have been proud and privileged to have him as one of our members."

FAA centenary is celebrated

THE FLEET Air Arm Association (Hanworth branch) have staged a celebration to commemorate the centenary of the formation of the Fleet Air Arm.

More than 100 people attended the event, at which a number of standards were paraded.

Hanworth, along with Birmingham and Gosport, was one of the three branches which met in 1985 and agreed to form a national Fleet Air Arm Association.



● Members of the HMS Fisgard Series 29 Artificer Apprentice Entry gather at the ME Museum in HMS Sultan

Tiffies gather at Sultan

HMS SULTAN opened the doors of its Marine Engineering Museum for sailors attending the annual reunion of HMS Fisgard Series 29 Artificer Apprentice Entry – 105 artificer apprentices who joined the Royal Navy at HMS Fisgard, Torpoint in Cornwall in January 1957.

On this occasion 21 members of Series 29 Entry, together with their wives, travelled from all over Britain for the reunion, taking the opportunity to call in at Sultan's museum to view their training records.

The museum, founded in 1986, houses an extensive collection of records, artefacts and memorabilia associated with the training of marine engineering artificers, mechanics and mechanics from

1903 until the present day.

The museum is the last remaining depository of ME training records in the RN today, following the closure of HMS Fisgard in 1983 and HMS Caledonia in 1986.

Future additions of artificer training records will shortly cease as

artificer apprentices are no longer recruited with the introduction of the Engineering Technician.

The last artificer class undergoing training at Sultan complete their training to pass out in November 2010 – the end of an era.

Spirit of Aldenham lives on

THEY may be getting a little too long in the tooth to meet in person, but two old shipmates still foster the spirit of the last RN destroyer to be sunk in World War 2.

George Drewett contacted *Navy News* about Tommy Leonard, who is in his late 90s, and who survived the sinking of HMS Aldenham in December 1944 in the Adriatic.

George said: "At one time we used to meet in Aldenham each year to attend a church service to remember our fallen comrades."

"Now, getting a little older, we find the journey can no longer be made. Never mind, a phone call now and then, plus a Christmas card, keeps the spirit of our age alive."



● A survivor from the sinking of HMS Eagle on the Pedestal convoy to Malta still likes to maintain a naval environment, even in his 80s. The living room walls of Dick Greenwood's house in Wiltshire are adorned with almost 40 ship's crests (pictured above), and he also has some 25 ship's letterheads (dies) which are also mounted. Dick's sister, Nora, said although he suffered a stroke in 2007, he is still mentally alert. Below is another picture provided by Nora of Dick (left) and his brother Syd



Naval Quirks

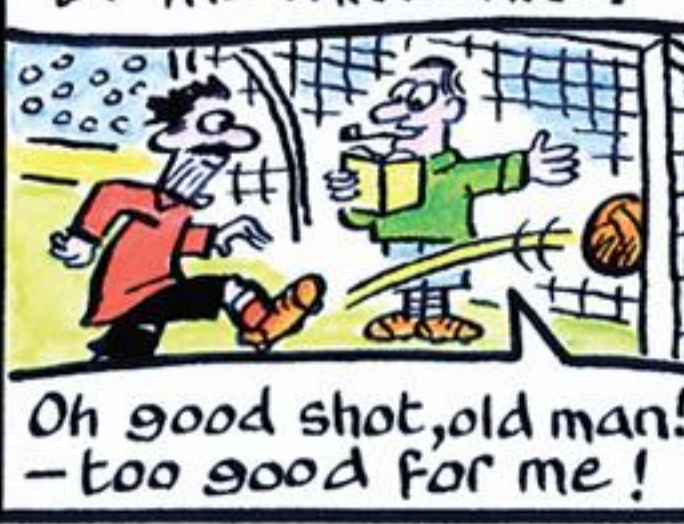
AH! THERE YOU ARE! I WAS JUST READING ABOUT THE LIBERATION OF YUGOSLAVIA IN 1945...



..FOR A TIME THERE WAS TENSION BETWEEN THE COMMUNIST PARTISANS AND THE RN PRESENCE – THE "DELHI" AND "COLOMBO".



..RELATIONS WERE EASED, HOWEVER, WHEN THE "DELHI'S" FOOTBALL TEAM DIPLOMATICALLY LET ITSELF BE BEATEN 12-1 BY THE PARTISANS!



AND HOW ARE YOUR TEAM PLAYING TODAY?





Ex-pats parade in Spain

MEMBERS of Torrevieja branch took part in a major parade which rounded off a day of displays and events in the Spanish city.

Torrevieja, in the province of Alicante, has a large ex-pat population – not just British – and the parade was part of the San Cristobel festival, San Cristobel being the patron saint of the Spanish armed forces.

Veterans from all countries were invited to turn up and march, and many serving personnel marched alongside them.

Spanish naval vessels were open to the public throughout the afternoon and among the displays were a simulated helicopter rescue and a Spanish military band.

Although there was a short wreath-laying ceremony, the parade was not a remembrance event as such, but paid tribute to all those who contributed to the freedoms that all enjoy today.

Ten up for Dorchester

DORCHESTER branch has celebrated its tenth anniversary with a dinner at the Wessex Hotel.

The guests of honour were national chairman S/M David White and his wife Monica – a fitting choice as S/M White commissioned the branch in 1999.

At the dinner S/Ms George Osborne (chairman) and Roy Dean (secretary) were presented with life memberships of the RNA for outstanding efforts on behalf of the association in general and the Dorchester branch in particular.

Magical association

SECOND Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey and his wife Julie attended the gala dinner of the HMS Newfoundland Association at the South Downs Holiday Centre, Bracklesham Bay.

This was the final meeting of the association, at which upwards of 300 members and guests attended.

Admiral Massey said: "It is

Aberdeen hosts Eagle reunion

AFTER a series of successful reunions of the last commission of the aircraft carrier HMS Eagle, a 'Nautical Extravaganza Weekend' has been staged in Aberdeen.

Former shipmates travelled from all over the UK to attend the action-packed weekend at the Northern Hotel.

After a very lively meet and greet on the Friday evening, sightseeing tours were laid on by the hotel and local Sea Cadet unit, TS Bon Accord.

The unit, based in Aberdeen, provided a minibus and driver to take a group to a local distillery in the village of Old Meldrum.

After the reception on the Saturday evening, dinner was piped by a young cadet, followed by Ceremonial Sunset and the Parading of the Haggis.

The Sea Cadet volunteers helped out during the evening, including the Grand Draw, with all the proceeds going to the unit.

One of the guests, 89-year-old Eddie Sherwin – who saw the reunion advertised in *Navy News* – didn't serve on the last Eagle, which entered service in 1952, but is a survivor of the previous Eagle, torpedoed off Malta in 1942 when 150 sailors lost their lives.

Former POSA Eddie was brought to the reunion by his daughter.

Bill Melvin, the main organiser of the Scottish reunion, said: "It



Studying a photograph of the sinking of the wartime HMS Eagle in front of one of the photographic displays at the meet and greet are Eddie Sherwin (left), Able Cadet Shaunnay Walker of TS Bon Accord, and the reunion main organiser Bill Melvin

has been a fantastic weekend and very well supported, and Eddie Sherwin – well, what a trooper.

"He is an inspiration to us all." Although some shipmates stayed until the Monday, most left after a get-together on the Sunday.

Assistant organiser and

membership secretary Danny du Feu said: "All the ex-Eaglets and guests were overwhelmed with the hospitality they received in Aberdeen, especially from the Sea Cadet unit."

He added: "Looking to the future, we have voted that the City

of Liverpool, which Eagle visited on more than one occasion, should be the venue for our next reunion in October 2010, and for which the planning has already begun."

For further details please contact Danny on 07891 660715 or email danny@ddf-photography.co.uk

Picture: Ex-CPO(Phot) Danny du Feu

Silver jubilee marked

THE HMS Middleton (L74) Association have just celebrated their 25th annual reunion at the RNA Club in Royal Leamington Spa.

Leading the celebrations was the ship's first First Lieutenant, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Edward Ashmore, and his wife Lady Elizabeth Ashmore.

The original Middleton was a Hunt-class destroyer, and the association was founded in 1984 when 12 members of the old ship's company met up at the commissioning of the current HMS Middleton at Rosyth.

Over the years more than 130 members of the former ship's company have joined, but time has taken its toll, leaving almost 40 who served in the ship between 1941 and 1946.

Members believe they must have one of the smallest associations for a World War 2 ship.

The original Middleton led a very active life, participating in 19 Arctic convoys – more than any other Hunt-class ship – and surviving the ill-fated Harpoon convoy to Malta in 1942.

She was also present at the D-Day landings, but survived the war intact, and was finally scrapped in 1957.

Bristol bash

THE Lord Mayor of Bristol and his wife were among the guests of honour at the 90th annual dinner and dance of the Bristol Royal Navy and Royal Marines Old Comrades Association.

Also at the event, in the wardroom of HMS Flying Fox, were Brigs Lang and Hill and association president Cdre Wood.

Insight into Malta tunnels

A RECENT article in the *Times of Malta* described how part of the Valletta fortifications, including a labyrinth of tunnels, were handed over by the Maltese Government to the Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna (Malta Heritage Trust) which will create a multi-period heritage park.

The properties include the saluting battery at the Barracca gardens, the nearby ditch, St Peter and St Paul counterguard and the tunnels beneath, including the Lascaris war rooms.

Some of the tunnels have never been opened to the public, and it is estimated that the project will take three years to complete.

Part of the complex has been used before as a tourist attraction under the heading of 'Lascaris War Rooms', but they have been shut and fallen into disrepair.

More than 20 members of the Lascaris (Malta) Association visited the island last year and were given the opportunity to tour the 'war rooms' and original Comcen.

While sections of the war rooms, complete with maps and mannequins in various Navy and RAF uniforms were still accessible, the Comcen is in a state of total disrepair, with all fixtures and fittings having been removed.

It took considerable debate, both in the actual Comcen and in a nearby bar afterwards to determine what office was where, how one got about, and who was chief of each of the four watches.

After the tour the Maltese civil servant in charge of the complex said that he had learnt more in the two-hour visit than he had from months of studying blueprints.

The association has contacted the Malta Heritage Trust to offer their assistance to enable them to gain an understanding of the layout and use of the Comcen and hope to visit the island next year.

Anyone interested in joining the Lascaris (Malta) Association should see the *Associations* section of *Navy News*.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our May edition (right) was HMS Sheraton, pictured in Hong Kong.

Mr J Digance of Dunfermline answered correctly, and wins our £50 prize.

This month's cruiser (above) was launched under one name during World War 2 but not commissioned until 16 years later – under another name.

What was her name at commissioning, and what was her name at launch?

We have removed her pennant number from the picture.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, *Navy News*, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving the correct answer will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.



Closing date for entries is August 14. More than one entry can be submitted, but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our September edition. The competition is not open to *Navy News* employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 173

Name

Address

My answers



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WEA Representatives conduct briefings/interviews regularly at Establishments (bookings taken through Resettlement/Education Centres), and by appointment onboard HM Ships.

A Naval Charity for ALL service and ex-service personnel of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, QARNNS, and their Reserves

Intranet HR info channel upgraded

THE PEOPLE Service Channel on the Defence Intranet has been upgraded and relaunched.

People Services is the main source of civilian HR information, whether you are a member of the civilian workforce or manage civilians.

The new channel includes an improved user interface, a new search engine and simplification of the content to distinguish policy from process – and managers believe the new-look channel will “fundamentally change the way that MOD staff interact with civilian HR services.”

In a typical week between 60,000 and 70,000 MOD staff access the People Services channel via the Defence Intranet.

Benefits to users include:

- The new channel is far more intuitive, attractive and simple to use, allowing users to ‘hover’ over menu items, making it quicker and easier to trace the route needed to required information;
- Several different routes to required information, via the main menu, or quick links, and graphics will also draw users to more popular elements of the site.

Dynamic elements of the page will be periodically updated and include hot topics and frequently-asked questions; ‘Policy Rules and Guidance’ are replaced by a more appealing format which clearly differentiates what the ‘policy’ is and what the ‘process’ is on any given topic.

Content will include an easy-to-follow flow chart and clear policy statements, and it will use clearer language;

■ A new search engine provides a more powerful facility for the updated content, finding more relevant results for the user against specific questions. However, it has limited functionality against current HR information.

Susan Scholefield, Director General Human Resources and Corporate Services, said: “This is an important and vital step forward, improving the HR service we offer our customers.”

“It should help busy line managers quickly find clear answers to their HR questions; leaving them time to get on with the job of managing their team.”

Users testing the new channel said: “HR Information is now being presented in bite-sized chunks, and there are a variety of ways to get to the right answer.”

“The new People Services channel offers a great advantage to busy people and it is also offering clear, short policy and process descriptions against HR topics that are relevant to me.”

Access the new People Services Channel via the Defence Intranet at <http://defenceintranet.diiweb.r.mil.uk/DefenceIntranet/PeopleServices/>

This should be first port of call for anybody with an HR issues or question.

Any feedback or suggestions should be sent to PPPA-PeopleChannel@MOD.UK

Learning at work – on board the Ark



HMS ARK Royal offered a unique opportunity for 14 employees within the Naval Command HQ when it hosted an all-areas tour as part of the National Learning at Work Day campaign.

The day, the biggest annual celebration of workplace learning, aims to draw attention to the importance of workplace learning and skills and each year thousands of organisations take part and stage fun and business-related learning experiences to help their staff learn new skills.

With HMS Ark Royal currently in a docked Contractor Support

● **Members of the Navy Command Headquarters visit HMS Ark Royal**

Picture: LA(Phot) Gregg Macready

Period the tour, guided by Lt Daren Leslie, enabled the visitors to experience life on board a very busy warship, and included visits to the bridge, flight deck and Ships Control Centre.

The highlight of the tour was a trip down into the dock bottom which provided the unique opportunity to view Ark Royal from an angle not normally seen.

Lt Leslie said: “Schemes like this are a perfect opportunity for the Royal Navy to demonstrate to our civilian counterparts exactly what life is like on board during a busy maintenance period.”

“I think that it is important that they are given this chance to see how the requirements of a warship change from those demanded at sea.”

Good or bad, what issues need raising?



FOR nearly six years now the Naval Families Federation has been working on behalf of all our Navy and RM families to ensure that their independent voices and opinions are heard.

Changes in policy or provision and the challenges that Naval and Service life bring form the bedrock of our discussions with families.

We recently undertook a visit to see families in the Yeovilton area, and it was super to see that so many people came to talk to us and took the opportunity to raise some timely and important issues.

Here is a taster of some of the things we talked about and also a couple of things we would like some feedback on:

■ **The Maritime Change Programme** has now been announced, and shows all the planned changes for the home ports of RN ships and submarines as well as RM Commando units.

Whilst this is for the future, in the words of Baden-Powell: “Be prepared.”

■ **Security of SFA/SSFA:** What, if any, issues do you have regarding security of your SFA/SSFA?

■ **Continuity of Education Allowance (formerly Boarding School Allowance):** There have

been some slight changes – are you up-to-date and clear on the processes that are now in place?

■ **Childcare for children up to age eight:** The impression is that whilst excellent childcare is available, it may be that some families are experiencing frustration in obtaining a place for their children which dovetails with their working day.

The additional concern of moving and obtaining consistent care is one that has a recurring theme – do you have any comments?

■ **Dental care for non-serving personnel and their children:** We have a dentistry poll on our website. As well as looking at all the features and news, please take a moment to pass on feedback on the ease of finding a dentist in your area.

■ **Are you reading this overseas?** Have you heard of BFPO changes?

A dozen Forces Post Offices (FPOs) providing support to the UK elements of NATO HQs are to be closed as savings measures within Planning Round 09.

The affected FPOs are expected to close by September 30 2010, after which postal support will use normal international civilian channels – as is the case in other overseas locations where there is no FPO cover.

BFPO addresses are far more than a convenient way to receive post – they are peace of mind and a legitimate recognised connection with UK.

They are also a reliable and timely method for postal voting. How is this to be achieved in the future?

We’re told that the Living Overseas Allowance (LOA) will

be uplifted to offset closures – I guess one question we have to ask is ‘at what cost?’

So the big question – are these things affecting you? Is there something else we should be focusing on? What is good and working, because we don’t often hear about that.

The RN and RM community is a very resourceful group and is fantastic at exploring solutions, but if you don’t know how to pursue an issue, or you feel that you need to get your view point across, contact us on 02392 654374 or email admin@nff.org.uk

Along with the assistance of TWO.SIX, we will be featuring as a regular item in *Navy News*, and look forward to highlighting topics for all our families.

RN Presentation Team summer dates

FORTHCOMING RN Presentation Team events include:

- **Tuesday July 7** at the Station Hotel, Castle Hill, Dudley;
- **Wednesday July 8** at the Co-operative Sports and Social Club, 23 Dugdale Street, Nuneaton;
- **Tuesday July 14** at the National Glass Centre, Liberty Way, Sunderland;
- **Wednesday July 15** at the Scotch Corner Hotel, Junction A1/A66, Middleton Tyas, Richmond;
- **Tuesday July 28** at the Berkshire Stand, Newbury Racecourse, Newbury;
- **Wednesday July 29** at the Ashford International Hotel, Simone Weil Avenue, Ashford, Kent
- **Thursday July 30** at the NRSA Lord Roberts Centre, Bisley Camp, Brookwood, nr Woking.

Anyone wishing to book a place should contact the RNPT on 020 8833 8020 or visit the website at www.royalnavy.mod.uk

Early departure could pay dividends

INDIVIDUALS serving in the Navy on the AFPS05 pension scheme should be fully aware that in order to leave the Armed Forces with a full 100 per cent pension and gratuity, they must serve until their 55th birthday, or beyond, writes David March, Pensions Secretary of the Forces Pension Society.

Leaving the Services before that point means that they are awarded an Early Departure Payment income stream and a lump sum until they (usually) reach the age of 65.

Given the above you would be quite right to assume that anybody who considered leaving the Services just before their 55th birthday would be ‘off their rocker’ – but would they?

Let’s look at two Warrant Officers about to leave the Services, one on his 55th birthday and one two weeks before his 55th birthday, and make comparison of the terminal benefits they are likely to receive by age 65.

We will assume that both these people joined the Services on the same day (March 17 1971) and they share identical birthdays (September 17 1954).

Both are on WO1 salary level 7 Higher Band.

As you can see (right), there is a marked difference in their overall receipts by the time they reach their 65th birthdays, and despite the fact that one chap left a couple of weeks before his 55th birthday, and accepted a 25 per cent reduction in the value of his income stream between the ages of 55 and 65; it is abundantly clear that that sacrifice will pay

dividends in the form of an additional lump sum of the same value as that first awarded on his date of exit.

Furthermore, that second lump sum will increase each April by the level of the Headline Rate of the Retail Price Index for the previous September, so whilst it has no greater value, in terms of pounds and pence it will be a much greater figure than the original award on exit.

Finally, another option open to the Warrant

Officer who left before his 55th birthday is that he can draw his benefits due to be paid to him on his 65th birthday, any time between age 55 and 65 (although there will be some adjustment to the amount payable), without the loss of the EDP Income Stream.

I will return to that issue another time.

Do you have the choice of leaving just before 55?

Choose wisely!

Exit date	Sept 17 2009 (age 55)	Sept 3 2009 (age 54)
Pension at age 55	£24,841.23	
Gratuity (tax free) at age 55	£74,523.69	
EDP lump sum (tax free) on exit		£74,367.90
EDP annual income stream on exit		£18,178.82
EDP income at age 55		£18,591.98
Pension at age 65		£24,789.30
Gratuity (tax free) at age 65		£74,367.90
Total receipts at age 65:		
Income tax at 20 per cent	*£273,253.53	**£298,029.46
Income tax at 40 per cent	*£223,571.07	**£260,706.04

*These figures are made up of tax free gratuity and ten times annual pension less 20 per cent or 40 per cent for tax

**These figures are made up of tax free EDP lump sum, plus tax free gratuity plus 14 days EDP income stream on exit, plus ten times annual EDP income at age 55 less 20 per cent or 40 per cent for tax

Ministerial changes announced

FOLLOWING the appointment of Bob Ainsworth as the new Defence Secretary, the Prime Minister has appointed Bill Rammell and Lord Drayson to the Defence ministerial team.

Bill Rammell will succeed Bob Ainsworth as Armed Forces Minister, while Lord Drayson will be Minister for Strategic Defence Acquisition Reform, including the championing of new technologies.

Quentin Davies will remain Parliamentary Under Secretary (PUS) and Minister for Defence Equipment and Support, Baroness Taylor will remain PUS and Minister for International Defence and Security, and Kevan Jones remains PUS and Minister for Veterans.

It's your 2-6

NEED to get your message across to the rest of the RN?

To feature in 2-6 contact WO1 Baz Cooke (Fleet Media Ops), 93832 8821, email FLEET-DCS-INFO-IC WO



Grafton in at capture of Gibraltar

TROPHY 26318 is a silver crowned lion's head on a decorative plinth, presented to HMS Grafton by Lady Abbott, the ship's sponsor, who launched the frigate in November 1994.

The silver scrolls on the plinth list the Battle Honours held by Grafton, one being the capture of Gibraltar on July 24 1704.

The British fleet – including the third-rate 70 gun HMS Grafton – under Admiral Sir George Rooke had planned to attack Cadiz or Barcelona but, with insufficient troops available, it was decided to attack Gibraltar instead.

On July 21 1,800 English and Dutch Marines under the Prince of Hesse-Darmstadt were landed; they met little opposition and demanded the surrender of the fortress.

The English ships were then warped into positions from which they could bombard the forts.

Two days later both sides opened fire, the inhabitants of Gibraltar taking refuge in a chapel.

The engagement was ended at midday so that the situation could be reviewed; finding that the batteries had been disabled, further troops were landed by boat to capture them.

The Governor of Gibraltar surrendered on July 24, but the Rock was then subjected to continuous attention by the French and Spanish for almost six months before the siege was raised.

In 1827 King George IV granted the Marines the Globe as their badge and gave them the battle honour of Gibraltar for their crest and colours.

London room offer

THE Victory Services Club in London is demonstrating its support to all regulars and reservists returning on R&R or post-operational tour leave from Afghanistan or Iraq by offering up to 50 per cent off the cost of single, double and family rooms.

Call 020 7723 4474, email info@vsc.co.uk or see website www.vsc.co.uk



● RM Reservists training in Norway earlier this year

RMR employers visit Norway

EMPLOYERS of RMR staff got the chance to see their colleagues' 'other life' when they visited Norway during Exercise Hairspring earlier this year, writes Lt Col Gavin Richards RMR, Unit Employer Support Officer, RMR London.

The visit was part of the Employers Abroad programme, through which employers get the opportunity to meet reservists carrying out training.

It was arranged by RMR Tyne and SaBRE (Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers) – an MOD campaign designed to build support for reservists from their employers.

The visitors gained a detailed understanding of the training that RMR and 131 Cdo RE men undergo to prepare them for operations – training which can bring valuable spin-off benefits, including initiative,

reliability, organisation, planning, problem-solving, leadership and team work.

Nine senior employers were selected from the private and public sector for the visit, including representatives from local authorities, the BBC, the Prison Service, Lloyd's of London and Royal Mail.

After a night in a Harstad hotel, the SaBRE group were briefed then moved into the field where they slept in tents, some managing to spend time with their 'own' reservist.

Next day brought skills demos and a meeting with Prince Michael of Kent, Rear Admiral Maritime Reserves; to round things off employers were given certificates and photos of their Arctic adventure.

Thanks to Lt Col Phil Sampson, WO2s 'Screw' Driver and Garrow, and RMR Tyne for the visit.

'SUNBURN' and the 'Falkland Islands' are not necessarily great words to use in a word association game, writes Maj Guy Balmer RM.

However, after a recent staff ride, these words – along with many other memories – will forever be on the minds of those involved.

The plan was that a group from the PJHQ in Northwood (from where the British element of the 1982 conflict was co-ordinated) would go for a week to analyse the operational level of the Conflict.

The cynics that argued that "if you want to study the operational level you should live in the 'bunker' for a week" were quickly discounted and planning began in earnest.

Early liaison with the RM Corps Secretary's Office on Whale Island established contact with both Maj Gen Julian Thompson (Commander 3 Cdo Bde RM in 1982) and Maj Gen Nick Vaux (CO 42 Cdo RM in 1982), whose support to the academic build up and the ride itself were invaluable.

Co-operation and support was given throughout by the Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands and his staff.

After months of planning and study the group assembled at Brize Norton for the epic that is a flight to the Falklands.

The group, with a strong 'Royal' contingent, comprised a mix of all the Services, a rank range from Maj Gen to Flt Sgt, and three 1982 veterans – Maj Gen Vaux, Brig Tim Chicken (3 Cdo Bde RM, HQ & Sigs Sqn) and Flt Sgt John Summers (RFA Fort Grange).

The days were spent analysing the campaign from the Argentine, air, maritime, amphibious and land perspectives, with the final day focussed on the Battle for Mount Harriet, 42 Cdo's final objective.

Whilst discussions were based at the operational level they invariably led into a few tactical weeds (and even included finding Brig Chicken's first bivvy position).

Consequently a great deal of East Falkland was visited, with stances taking place in Stanley (including Sapper Hill, Yorke Bay, Stanley Airfield and Moody Brook), San Carlos, Darwin and Goose Green, Teal Inlet, Mount Kent and Mount Harriet.

The expertise offered by guide



● Members of the staff ride party on top of Mount Harriet in the Falklands

Tony Smith was hugely beneficial in ensuring that we visited the key areas at each location, and his tour and analysis of the battle for Darwin and Goose Green was extremely eye-opening.

Needless to say discussions centred on both the achievements of 2 Para in very challenging circumstances and the leadership style of Lt Col 'H' Jones VC.

A proposal to do a smallie yomp and bivvy out was met with a muted response, however we did manage to get to a relatively unknown former British artillery gun position to the west of Mounts Kent and Challenger, largely untouched in the 27 years since.

To be able to crawl into dry bunkers built using peat-filled ammunition liners was certainly a testament to their construction.

The final day on Mount Harriet brought home the scale of what was achieved in 1982.

Having undertaken a 8,000-mile maritime transit, with limited air cover and over three weeks ashore in challenging conditions, UK forces conducted night-time assaults, getting to within metres of enemy positions before being detected, and captured night-on impregnable positions for, on occasions, relatively low numbers of casualties.

The possibility of operational

failure was always present and the strategic impact of this on the UK would have been immense.

After having polished both memorial plaques and had time to think, we left Mount Harriet with the impression that, whilst lessons can always be learnt, what was achieved by the personnel in 1982 would be difficult to be bettered given a similar situation today.

Socially we were extremely well looked after by the Stanley branch of the RMA, particularly chairman

John Adams, who was Gen Vaux's Radio Operator in 1982.

In addition Mike Rendell, former Falkland Island's Naval Party 8901, was instrumental in organising a reception with the Governor at Government House, where we met Islanders who had been resident during the Conflict.

Finally, if anyone is considering doing a similar excursion, a word of advice – despite the common view, it is possible to get sunburn during a Falkland Islands summer...



THE ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Once Navy Always Navy

What the Association does:

Supports the Royal Navy

Maintains Naval traditions

Enjoys social activities

Re-unites Shipmates

Remembers the fallen

Helps the disabled

Looks after the needy

Cheers up the distressed

Stands together in Unity



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Full Members

Consist of Serving and Ex-Serving members of the The Naval Service, WRNS, RFA, RNXS and RMA, regardless of Rank. Any person who served in the Naval Forces of a nation which is or was a member of the British Commonwealth.

Associate Members

Those in sympathy with our Objects, especially families.

Contact Nigel Huxtable at RNA HQ

Rm 209 Semaphore Tower, PP70, HM Naval Base, PORTSMOUTH PO1 3LT

Phone - 023 9272 3747 E-Mail - Nigel@royalnavalassoc.com

Website - www.royal-naval-association.com

Unity, Loyalty, Patriotism and Comradeship

Family focus at RNBT

ARE you or your partner serving or have you served in the RN as a rating or a Royal Marine, other ranks?

If so, the RNBT is your charity; it exists to give financial and other help to those in need or distress; the beneficiary group is known as the RNBT Family.

The RNBT Family is the collective term used to describe everyone who is eligible to be considered for assistance from the Trust.

As well as serving and former RN ratings and RM other ranks, eligibility extends to wives, husbands, dependent children and, in some circumstances, unmarried partners and those who are separated and divorced.

The RNBT is the largest of the benevolent charities for naval people, its beneficiary group is approximately 80 per cent of all those who are serving and have served and is estimated at well over two million strong.

The Trust is run very much by sailors and Royal Marines for sailors and Royal Marines.

More than two thirds of the trustees are serving or former sailors and Royal Marines and the Grants Committee, responsible for dealing with more than 4,000 cases per annum, comprises exclusively of peers, helping their peers.

The Committee made grants of over £2.6 million in the last financial year. The number of grants made in the current financial year at the time of *Navy News* going to press is shown in the RNBT's advert on page 5.

Some recent examples of help given include special equipment for the disabled daughter of a junior rating, essential household goods for a young rating in financial difficulties and with a large family, funding care for the 92-year-old widow of an ex-Royal Marine, a contribution towards university fees for the daughter of an ex-rating who died in his 40s and support for the care of members of the RNBT Family in hospices in Portsmouth and Plymouth.

The RNBT helped 314 serving personnel in 2007-08 to the tune of £142,000 and at the time of writing, 169 cases had been dealt with in the current financial year at a cost of £93,000.

The RNBT is very much in the business of supporting the front-line as well as retirees.

The core business of the RNBT has always been grant making. Help is given for food, clothing, rent, mortgage payments, house repairs, disability aids, household goods, training courses, medical matters, removals, funerals, festive holidays, annuities for older people and much more.

The committee consider every application with a mixture of compassion, pragmatism and a deep understanding of the people that ask for help.

Applications for help are

ordinarily made through a caseworker.

For serving personnel this is usually NPFS and for the retired community through either the Royal British Legion or SSAFA Forces Help.

In addition, the RNBT has its own caseworkers that respond very quickly when required.

Every case is considered by three members of the committee who decide on the level and type of help given.

The RNBT has a speed of response that very few other charities can match. In 2006/07 nearly 4,000 grants and annuities, totalling over £2.6 million were made and a good number of these went to help serving people and their dependants.

The Trust runs its own world-class care home – Pembroke House, near Chatham in Kent that provides nursing and personal care for up to 50 old sailors, Royal Marines and their wives and widows.

It is the only home that cares specifically for the RNBT Family and there is a long waiting list; more homes like Pembroke House would be very welcome.

Needy members of the RNBT Family able to look after themselves benefit from six almshouse 'cottages' run by the Trust at Hornchurch in Essex, originally purchased with money collected to raise a permanent memorial to Boy Seaman John Cornwell VC of Jutland fame.

The need for the RNBT's support outstrips the funds available.

Income is received from the Trust's own investments, grants from other organisations and donations from many sources.

Amongst the donations are those from serving people made via the Navy's payroll scheme, SABS.

This is a very good and easy way to help. Members of the scheme usually contribute a pound per week, taken from their pay in monthly instalments and this money is distributed amongst a number of RN and RM charities by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines charity.

More members are needed and Unit Personnel Officers can provide full details.

We receive a constant stream of requests for advice about welfare and naval matters.

Often we can provide the answer ourselves, but if not, we are usually able to direct the enquirer to someone who can.

If you need help or want to help others, read about us on our website – www.rnbt.org.uk or contact us at Castaway House.

The RNBT Headquarters
Castaway House,
311 Twyford Avenue,
Portsmouth
PO2 8RN

Telephone: 023 9269 0112;
fax: 023 9266 0852; email: rnbt@rnbt.org.uk



NOTICEBOARD

1969 1979 1989 THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

We flick back through the pages of *Navy News* to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...



● Leander-class HMS Hermione who featured in both the 1969 and 1989 July editions of *Navy News*

July 1969

NO FEWER than three Leander-class general purpose frigates commissioned in Portsmouth in July 1969. HMS Hermione and HMS Charybdis were to spend part of their general service deployments east of Suez, while HMS Jupiter was to go to the West Indies.

July's *Navy News* devotes almost a whole page to the commissioning forecast. September alone was to have ten commissions, including the frigates Scylla, Dido and Bacchante, and the Ashanti, Lowestoft and Hecla flights.

Commissions nowadays are few and far between, reflecting not just fewer ships but a different system. In the old days whole ships' companies commissioned post-maintenance, while nowadays, with squad drafting, only new ships are commissioned, with a rededication ceremony after a lengthy maintenance period or refit.

July 1979

IN July 1979 *Navy News* was speculating about the future of the Navy's most exciting new asset – the Sea Harrier.

The first had been delivered at a ceremony the previous month at Dunsfold, Surrey, attended by the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Terence Lewin, who told guests from British Aerospace: "We want them as fast as you can turn them out."

The paper reported that future possibilities included flying Sea Harriers from container ships, as both the US and RN were interested in operating helicopters and jump jets from their decks.

A ramp was being built at Yeovilton, the paper reported, to enable naval pilots to practise the "Ski-jump take-off".

Sadly the ski-jump ramp has now gone from RNAS Yeovilton as have the Sea Harriers, although Harriers still feature at the Joint Force's Stamford bases.

July 1989

MORE THAN 80 sailors from HMS Hermione joined in a major firefighting operation to save a blazing tanker in the Gulf.

The Leander-class frigate had picked up distress calls from the Greek tanker Drastirios early on June 1, reporting fires in the engine and boiler rooms and loss of power.

Hermione and RFA Olva were quickly on the scene but by the time they arrived the tanker had been ablaze for 17 hours.

Hermione's sailors brought in pumping and generating equipment and used 40 hoses, portable gas turbines and more than 80 foam-filled containers to fight the fire. Without the assistance of Hermione and Olva, the tanker would have suffered irreversible damage and might have been lost.

"The sailors fought like lions and heroes," said the master of the 83,000-ton Drastirios.

Diary dates

JULY

July 4: RN Volunteer Bands Festival at Guildhall Square featuring eight bands from RN establishments. Begins at 9.30am. Event is free but due to space limitations tickets should be obtained from Portsmouth Central Library.

July 11: RNAS Yeovilton Air Day: Celebrating 100 years of Naval aviation. See www.royalnavy.mod.uk/server/show/nav.4948. Tickets cost £21 (adults) and £8 (children) on the day, with concessions for

advance booking (£17, £14(OAP) and £5. Call 08445 781 781.

July 18-19: Royal Navy Past and Present at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Commemorating the 250th anniversary of the laying of HMS Victory's keel. Visitors will be able to board the Navy's newest warship HMS Daring, amid many other displays. Enquiries: 023 9283 9766, www.historicdockyard.co.uk.

July 18-19: Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire. Tickets

cost £39.95, under 16s with paying adult go free. Visit www.airtattoo.com/airshow or call 0800 107 1940.

July 29: RNAS Culdrose Air Day. The only day in the year when the public can step inside RNAS Culdrose. Tickets costing £12 (adult) and £4 (child) in advance, or £15 and £5 on the day, are available by calling 08705 321 321 or www.ticketzone.co.uk. Concessions for UK Armed Forces Veterans Badge and UK Merchant Seafarers Veterans Badge holders available. See www.royalnavy.mod.uk/server/show/nav.6201

[royalnavy.mod.uk/server/show/nav.6201](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/server/show/nav.6201)

SEPTEMBER

September 5-6: Navy Days: Meet Your Navy 09 at HM Naval Base Devonport, Plymouth. Tickets cost £14 (adults one-day) with concessions for pensioners and children, and multi-day entry. Ticket line 08445 78 78 78. Further information at www.royalnavy.mod.uk/navdays.

September 11: Dedication of Fleet Air Arm Memorial, National Arboretum, Staffordshire.

Where are you now?

HMS Newcastle and Exeter: Seeking Don Brothwell who served in Newcastle and Exeter in the 1980s. We lost contact, but I would really like to hear from him or someone who knows him. Contact Joanne née Haskell at PaulandJoanne@aol.com or tel: 07830 486107.

HMS Caprice: John (Brigham) Young is looking for Charles Baden (Freddie or Freddie) Fox. Charles lived in Salisbury before he joined the Navy. John hasn't seen his friend since they completed their service in 1963. If anyone can help could they contact John's daughter-in-law, Jayne Young at dave-young@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 0121 526 4296.

HMS Sheffield: Seeking Robert Fuller DSM, Chief Yeoman of Signals, HMS Sheffield WW2; Nautical Instructor TS Arethusa in the fifties. Can anyone tell me what happened to Mr Fuller, 'The Wiz' after

he left the Arethusa? If you know anything contact Philip Lickorish at philip@rogers.com or write to 1880 Valley Farm Road, Suite 722, Pickering, Ontario, Canada. L1V 6B3.

HMS Decoy: I have been for many years trying to track down an old shipmate by the name of John Raymond 'Tommy' Tucker. We served together in Decoy 1967-70, he was the POGI, I was the PO UW1. We maintained contact for a while whilst I was at the command sailing centre and he at 'Whaley' and now a CPOGI. My next draft as CPOUW1 was to Kent as Buffer and it was then we lost contact. He lived in Nailsea near Bristol. I now live in Palma, Mallorca. If you can help contact Bill Porter at billandcate@hotmail.com or tel: +34 971 400009.

HMS Condor, Arbroath: In July this year it will be the 50th anniversary of my joining the Fleet Air Arm and I was fortunate to be

enrolled in 50 Class, Air Engineering. I say fortunate because in my opinion I was lucky enough to be in the company of collectively the finest group of lads ever seen together in one unit. Where are you all now, lads? I wonder if any of you are interested in getting in touch for a possible reunion. Some names I remember are: Pete Beasley, Trevor Foster, Dave Owen, Mike Elliot, Tim Ridgeway, Jock Robertson, Ian Harrison, George Armstrong, Rob Taylor, Roy Meakin, R Nicholas, Rod Smith, J Webb and apologies to a few whose names have dimmed over time. Please call Bill Hughes on 01407 831362.

HMS Mohawk: Any old Mohawks out there? If you are interested there is an association, open to crew and family from any of the ships names Mohawk. Reunion in October at Hayling Island. Contact Joe Artis at joeartis@hmsmohawk.org.uk or write to

69 Dunmore, Park Barn Estate, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 8JX.

Royal Naval Electrical Branch Association is there to reunite you with your old shipmates from the Electrical Mess. This new and rapidly growing association with hundreds of members has its own Blazer Badge and Tie, all sporting the distinctive flashes of the Electrical Branch and now our own colour newsletter. The web site, <http://www.meba.org.uk> is where you can see details of many members. Our next reunion is on the South Coast and is filling fast. A lot of 'Lamp swinging' has already taken place and there will be a lot more. If you are ex Royal Naval Electrical, send your details and the ship you would most like to find your shipmates from, to Membership Secretary and Newsletter Editor Brian Joy, 237a Tithe Farm Court, Alexandra Avenue, Harrow, HA2 9DN.

NAVY NEWS

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Reporting from the Fleet

Deaths

Rear-Admiral Derek Spickernell. Trained as an artificer apprentice and was selected for a commission in 1939. He graduated as a lieutenant (E) in 1942 and was appointed to Abdiel laying minefields in the Sicilian narrows. In 1943 he transferred to the Wayland based in North Africa then volunteered for submarines. After training in the UK he joined the submarine Tally Ho at Trincomalee taking part in successful actions against Japanese shipping and in 1944 he transferred to the Statesman as engineer officer; her patrols saw many enemy vessels sunk by gunfire; she also fired the last British torpedo of the WW2. After the war he served in submarines Telemachus, Tudor and Alcide; by 1951 was in charge of submarine refits at Portsmouth; by 1960 was Deputy Captain Superintendent of the underwater weapons research establishment at Portland. Promoted Captain 1962 he was CO of Figsard; 1967-70 deputy director of the Naval Ship Production Department at Bath; 1970 promoted commodore and was chief executive of the Defence Quality Assurance Board at the MOD. Promoted rear-admiral 1971 and appointed CB in 1974. He was Director General Quality Assurance at the MOD (Procurement Executive) until retiring 1975. May 14. Aged 87.

Capt Frank Gregory-Smith DSC* DSO*. Entered Dartmouth 1922 and served as a cadet on Tiger in 1927. As a midshipman he served in Cumberland and Suffolk on the China station and in 1932 as a lieutenant he served in Warspite, then two years in the gunboat Cricket on the Yangtze. As 1Lt in Foresight during the Spanish Civil War he saw action; and in the Norwegian campaign in Jaguar then she was ordered to Dunkirk where she was crippled but towed back to Dover due to his efforts at damage-control. In 1940 he commissioned the Eridge and was to be her only captain. After Atlantic convoys, he deployed in 1941 to the Mediterranean where he was ordered to protect a damaged destroyer Firecracker and was awarded a DSC. At the second battle of Sirte in 1942, Eridge was reduced to firing blanks to protect the merchantman Clan Campbell – the slowest of the dispersed convoy and eventually sunk just outside Valetta; Eridge picked up survivors around a minefield for three hours and he received the DSO. Weeks later he was awarded a Bar for his part in the 15-hour pursuit of U568. Later Eridge was torpedoed amidst ships by an Italian MTB, causing flooding and she was towed back to Alexandria with a 20ft hole; he was mentioned in despatches. After appointment as senior training officer for force G he helped plan the landings on Gold Beach in Normandy and acted as principal beachmaster in the assault phase of D-Day, for which he was awarded a Bar to his DSC. In the 1950s he was naval attaché in Ankara and his last appointment was as Chief Staff Officer (Intelligence) to CinC Mediterranean; he retired from the Navy in 1960. His memoirs are deposited with the Imperial War Museum and *Red Tobruk*, the story of his wartime years, was edited by his grandson and published in 2008. May 4. Aged 99.

Surg Cdr Lucan Pratt RNVR. Graduated in medicine 1929 his special interest was the chemistry of digestion and anaesthesia and the expert medical evidence he submitted to the Board of Inquiry into the loss of the submarine Thetis in Liverpool Bay in 1939 led to his appointment as medical officer in charge of the Royal Navy's Physiological Laboratory at Alverstoke, Hampshire. He helped build the submarine escape test tanks at Dolphin and was appointed OBE. At great peril to himself in 1944 he studied at close range the physiological effects of underwater explosions; a job which he estimated would be completed in eight weeks before the imminent Normandy landings. One practical outcome was the design of the kapok jacket used for the protection of frogmen clearing French harbours such as Cherbourg. May 14. Aged 87.

Cdr Brian Goord DSC. After serving in the New Zealand Shipping Company until 1934 he joined the RNR and while training at Dartmouth Naval College he was recruited into the Royal Indian Navy (RIN) which at the outbreak of WW2 owned only eight minor warships and depended on the Royal Navy for officers. His first seagoing appointment was to the sloop Hindustan in 1935. In 1938 he returned for specialist courses in navigation and anti-submarine warfare and became the RIN's staff anti-submarine officer and CO of the anti-submarine school. He invented the Goord Goldfish, a device that issued a stream of bubbles when towed behind a motor-boat that returned a credible submarine-like echo for training Asdic (under-water detection) operators in ships. In 1944 he was on anti-submarine patrol near the Seychelles as part of Eastern Fleet Force 66 when U198 was sunk and the Asdic performance was particularly praised – he was awarded the DSC. From 1945 to the end of the war with Japan he was assistant chief of staff (operations and intelligence) to the Flag Officer RIN. 1946 there was widespread civil unrest fuelled by activists, one officer and nine ratings died and he was sent to INS Valsura, the torpedo school at Jamnagar in Gujarat, to preside over a local board of inquiry; on the transfer of power to India and the division of the navy between India and Pakistan he was compulsorily retired in 1947. May 18. Aged 97.

Lt Vivian Cox. Joined RNVR in 1940 and served in Eulace, Commissioned as a sub-lieutenant he was selected to work in the Admiralty War Room and set up the floating map room on board Duke of York for Winston Churchill and accompanied him to Washington where President Roosevelt

requested that he set up a similar map room in the White House. In 1942 he was appointed Junior Staff Officer (Flag Lieutenant) to Vice-Admiral Bruce Fraser and served in Anson. The following year he sailed with Admiral Fraser on board Duke of York witnessing the sinking of the Scharnhorst and the Japanese surrender. At the invitation of General McArthur he was one of the first four Allied servicemen into Tokyo after the surrender. He demobbed in 1946 when his career in films began. April 27. Aged 93.

Sir Peter Webster. Upon leaving school in 1942 he joined the Fleet Air Arm and was sent first to New Brunswick, Canada and then on to Lake Ontario for basic flying training. Subsequently he was sent by the Admiralty to Somerset where he learnt to fly a Tiger Moth. Although he was not involved in combat his job of flying planes on and off aircraft carriers was dangerous; in his group of 19 pilots there were only two survivors. April 10. Aged 85.

Daniel Patrick Carroll (Danny La Rue). Entered the RN at 18 and served in the Far East. He joined the ship's concert party and looked stunning in his first part dressed up as a native girl in *White Cargo* and continued to star as a girl in concert party revues throughout his three years in the Navy; he was demobbed in 1947. He returned to his job as a window dresser for a short time then was offered a job in the chorus of *Forces Showboat* and appeared in *Forces in Petticoats* and *Soldiers in Skirts*. He raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for Aids charities, work for which he was appointed OBE in 2002. May 31. Aged 81.

Peter Lockwood. L/S. Served 1952-62 in Opossum, Ulysses and St Austell Bay; member of HMS Wizard and HMS Cadiz Association. April 19. Aged 72.

Ady Medford. Associate member HMS Wizard and HMS Cadiz Association. Widow of John Medford navigator yeoman 1944-46. June 8.

Denis Gordon Atkins. POMA. Served 1943-47 in Victorious, Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and Pacific. Burma Star Association. May 12. Aged 85.

Stanley Norris. CPO(OC). Served 1951-73 in Victory, Ceres, Dryad, Indomitable, St Vincent, CinC Ports, Sheffield, Excellent, Afrikander (SA), Eastbourne, Ganges and Grenville. Nautical Club Birmingham. May 21. Aged 77.

Lawrence 'Andy' Anderson. POEL. Took part in the battle to sink the Scharnhorst. Served in submarines Cyclops (D-Day operations), Safari, Token, Saga and Tabard; also served St George, Defiance, Dolphin, Forth, Drake, Phoenixia, Childers, Cumberland, Collingwood and Diana. May 21 Prince Edward Isle, Canada.

Colin Roskilly. CPO Cook. Served the RN for 32 years in Volage, Indomitable, Triumph, Ceylon, Lion, Murray and Vernon. May 12. Aged 80.

Lt Cdr Desmond Kelly. Served Vernon, Dartmouth Training Squadron, RNAS Brawdy, RNAS Halfar, Malta, BRNC Dartmouth, Sultan and Terror. April 29. Aged 75.

Derek John Wood. CPO. Joined as a boy and served 1942-68 in Jewel, Indomitable, Wakeful, Belfast, Terror (1960-63) and Hecla (1968). April 16. Aged 80.

P J 'John' Wray. NA(AH). Served 1948-55 in Ocean (Korea), Illustrious and Indefatigable. Derbyshire branch Fleet Air Arm Association.

Stanley G. Allott. POAM(E). Served 1940-46 in Formidable (Far East 1942). Founder member and treasurer for many years of Wrekin branch Fleet Air Arm Association. Aged 92.

Frederick E Thornton. Ordinary Seaman. Served in Glorious 1940 and last remaining of the Glorious '38 survivors following her sinking 8 June 1940. Founder member of Glorious, Ardent & Acasta Association (GLARAC). May 9. Aged 87.

James Hudson. CPO FAA. Served 1948-79 in 845 NAS, Culdrose, Bulwark and Borneo. May 18. Aged 79.

Rita Errington. Chief Wren Stores. Served 1951-73 Fleet Air Arm in most air stations in safety equipment and flying clothing. Aged 78.

John Forgham. LME. Served 1952-61 in submarines Aurochs and Thermopylae. June 11. Aged 74.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION
Edward George 'Ted' Currey. AB. Leading Torpedo Operator. Served WW2 1943-46. Perth, Western Australia branch. May 13. Aged 84.

Keith Wild. Associate member Hanworth RNA Club. May 21.

Charles H R Breden. AB SG Gunnery. Joined Chatham 1943 and served in Bristol, Glandower, Wellesley, SS President III DEMS, SS Dalanna DEMS, Golden Hind, Indefatigable and Pembroke. Chelmsford RNA. May 12. Aged 84.

Ronald Frederick 'Joe' Palmer RM. Wartime service on craft LCF19 (LCGF 175). Market Harborough branch; he left bottles of rum and port for shipmates to celebrate his life at the next meeting. April.

Edward Pitts. Served in the 15th Royal Hussars Malay Borneo Confrontation. Associate member of Lydd and Dungeness RNA. May 23. Aged 73.

Frank Leonard Trindall. Able Seaman. Chatham rating. Served 1939-51 over the war in Tobruk and other campaigns and into the Suez crisis. Aboard Kimberly when torpedoed and received the 'Oak Leaf' for his bravery. Life member of Cleethorpes RNA and also a long-standing chair of the same branch. June 7 in Western Australia.

Dave Wackrill. AB. Served 1939-45. Piped Sir Winston Churchill aboard Prince of Wales when she took to him to Canada to

meet Roosevelt 1941. Survived the sinking when she was bombed by the Japanese in the South China Sea 1941. Letchworth and Hitchen RNA and previously Harwich and district branch. May 29. Aged 91.

Bob Parry. Served 1943-46 at Pembroke and on several ships in the Far East and home waters, also LST landing craft during the D-Day landings. Wrexham branch. May 30.

John Tarbin. Joined Ganges as HO 1943 and served on minesweepers in Malta and Italy. Vice President of Sudbury, Halstead and Heddingham RNA. June 1. Aged 85.

ASSOCIATION OF RN OFFICERS
Cdr G Anderson. Served: Alaunia, President, Defender, Osprey, Heron, Ark Royal, Mercury, Britannia, Sultan and Excellent.

Lt W G E S Cloke. Served: Condor, Raleigh, Gannet, Drake, Seahawk and Sanderling.

Capt G S Coumbe. Served: Anson, Osprey, Belfast, Collingwood and Nelson.

Lt Cdr G M Craig-McFeely. Served: Charity, Vernon, Defender, Dolphin and Caesar.

Cdr D B Davis. Served: Gambia, Eagle, Torquay, Vernon, Danae, Juno, Dolphin, Centurion and Flydd.

Lt Cdr J H P Flegg. Served: Shropshire, Egret, Wakeful and St Vincent.

Communications Officer R H George. Served: Bherunda, Blackcap, Nuthatch, Sanderling, Heron and Gamecock.

Lt Cdr G Howlett-Martin. Served: Marauder

Lt E W Huke. Served: Phoebe, Figsard, Chameleon and Malcolm

Cdr B M D 'Anson. Served: Jersey, Wolfhound, Leamington, Intrepid, Meynell, Rocket, Comus, President, Drake, Seahawk and Loch Lomond.

Lt H C Knight. Served: St Vincent, Hermione, Orlando and Cabala.

Lt Cdr I G Lovesey. Served: Nigeria, Surprise, Dryad, Crane, Duchess and Vigo.

Lt F Matthews RNVR

Lt Cdr R D C McAlpine RNVR. Served: President

Lt Cdr S A Mearns DSC. Served: Heron.

Cdr B H C Nation. Served: Daedalus, Vulture, Triumph and Eagle.

Lt Cdr J S Pallot. Served: Enterprise, Devonshire, Alfray, Tamar, Gravelines and Striker

Lt B C B Portman. Served: Repulse, Ramillies and Vernon.

Capt D G Roome. Served: Prince of Wales, Tremadoc Bay, Cheviot, Chevron, Pembroke, Tyrian, Loch Lomond, Britannia, President, Euryalus and Malabar.

Capt C le M Scott. Served: Renown, Black Prince, Sussex, Excellent, Dampier, Victory and President.

Chaplain R C Sinclair. Served: Sea Eagle, Victory and Lion

Cdr A J R Smith. Served: Gambia, Euryalus, Mounts Bay, President and Armada.

Lt Cdr R J Thompson RD* RNR.

Cdr R J Tunstall. Served: Daedalus, Albatross, Fulmar and Drake.

Lt F W C Wake. Served: Torquay, Bellerophon and Barrosa.

Lt J C Williams

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION

D 'Derrick' Alsopp. Tel T/O. Submarine service 1943-46 in Unshaken and Tally-Ho. Sheffield branch. Aged 83.

A 'Andrew' Brown. CPO EA. Submarine service 1952-68 in Tudor, Aeneas, Scorch and Alliance. Dolphin branch. Aged 80.

J E 'John' Dixon. CEMA(P). Submarine service 1940-72 in Severn, U1023, Sea Devil, Sturdy, Thorough, Tradewind, Truncheon, Finwhale and Otway (RAN). Barrow branch. Aged 87.

P 'Pat' Harmsworth. Tel(TO). Submarine service 1945-48 in Storm, Taciturn, Tactician and Telemachus. New Zealand branch. Aged 81.

D 'Don' Ritchie. AB UW2. Submarine service 1954-62 in Tiptoe, Trenchant, Seadevil, Talent, Artemis and Tireless. Bromley branch. Aged 73.

G A 'George' Underwood. L/Sto (MID*). Submarine service 1940-52 in Otway, Sahib, Tuna and Scythian. Northants branch. Aged 92.

B F 'Bernard' Warwick. AB ST. Submarine service 1942-46 in Telemachus. Blackpool branch. Aged 83.

D 'Dave' Webster. L/Sea UC2. Submarine service 1961-64 in Narwhal and Onslaught. Blyth branch. Aged 71.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION
James Wood. PO(LTO). Served in Postillion. Aged 88.

Phillip D Edwards. AB. Served in Regulus. March 20. Aged 83.

Lt Cdr William G Harding. Served in Lioness. April 24. Aged 91.

Gordon Martin. AB. Served in Marvel. May 31. Aged 74.

Benny Thompson. AB. Served in Rifleman and Plucky. June 12. Aged 84.

DUKE OF YORK ASSOCIATION
Edmund Horace Arthur Mooby. Chief Stoker on board Duke of York 1942-45 serving on Russian and Arctic Convoys from Scapa Flow also in Tokyo Bay for the Japanese surrender. January 10. Aged 93.

Sidney 'Sid' Charles Pickett. Joined ship as a Boy Seaman and was a Signaller on board Duke of York 1942-43 and drafted to King George V 1945; also HMS Belfast Association. May 17. Aged 83.

Colin John Child. Seaman. Served the RN for 25 years and was on board Duke of York 1944-46 as a Boy Seaman during the Japanese surrender. May 30. Aged 82.

Ask Jack

Royal Tournament: Whilst at the Royal Tournament 1959 as part of Field Gun Battery Office Team, an American gentleman saw our Battery Cdr, Cdr Peter Barton, with a view to taking a team and their equipment to appear at Chicago's 'Grand of Osprey'. I believe a team of FAA went there. Were any of the Navy News readers part of that team? Contact Colin Taylor, 53 Bernard House, Henrys Walk, Ilford, IG6 2NS.

Capt K L Harkness RN: Col Ronnie McCrum is doing a doctorate on the British attitudes towards and ideas about the Japanese before WW2, which indirectly led to the debacle of the fall of Singapore. He has discovered that the RN intelligence organisation there was headed by a Capt Harkness, who reported directly to the CinC, Admiral Layton, and he wants to find out more about him. In particular, he would like to find out more about his family, whether he had children, and thus to track down any family papers which might be of interest in his researches. In the event that you are able to help could you contact Capt R F Channon RN at randeschannon@aspects.net or write to Almond House, Stoke by Nayland, Colchester, CO6 4SA.

Stoker F E Ellis: Seeking relatives of Stoker, F E Ellis who served in WW1. I have a medal which I would like to return to his family. Contact Mrs A Dubb on 01769 572939.

Civil Service: Alfred is willing to pay for sets of the 1934 through to 1939 (or parts) of Civil Service Examination Papers for entry into the Royal Navy as Engine-room Artificer Apprentices. Contact Alfred E Deebie, 196 Cornwell Avenue, Valley Stream, NY, 11580, USA.

Falkland Islands 1982-83: CRS Terry Hutchinson served RN 1979-2003, RAN 2003-2007. I am trying to locate a photograph of a group of matelots which included myself being awarded the South Atlantic Medal from the then Governor, Sir Rex Hunt in late 1982/early 1983 at Government House Port Stanley. One of the group was a Lt Cdr who wore the green beret being an ex bootie. I lost my copy and would appreciate any help in getting it replaced. I served on board HMS Glasgow and recall one of the group was on board the Sheffield during the conflict. Contact Terry Hutchinson at mackemdownunder@hotmail.com or 28 Ritchie Drive, Rockingham, 6168, Western Australia.

HMS Indomitable Association: The numbers in the association are diminishing, so we are looking for anyone who served in Indomitable between 1941 and 1955 to keep the association going as long as possible. We have an AGM in September and a quarterly newsletter is sent to members. Any member of the ship's company is invited to contact the secretary Ralph Harvey at ralphharvey@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 01642 490463.

HMS Porpoise: To help with a project 'Rommel's Africa Campaign', we are looking for surviving veterans from Porpoise. The captain was Lt Cdr E F Pizey, when the Porpoise attacked the Italian SS Jason (Sebastiano Venier) on December 9, 1941. Besides any surviving veterans, does anyone know of any written or recorded memories of eye witnesses? If you can help please contact Dr Carl Werner von Savigny at c.savigny@web.de or write to MPR Film und Fernseh Produktion GmbH, Prinzregentstr. 75, D-81675, München, Germany.

HMS Kandahar: Seeking survivors and relatives who wish to be informed of the 1941 disaster. Contact Valerie Pennifer on 01462 711188 or valeriepennifer@hotmail.com

Honours

Appointments to the Military Division of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath
As Knight Commander
Vice Adm Alan Michael Massey
As Companions

Rear Adm David John Cooke; Rear Adm Neil Morisset; Rear Adm Anthony John Rix

Appointments to the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire
As Commanders
Cdre Eric Fraser; Cdre David John Jarvis; Cdre David George Steel

As Officers
Cdr Alan Joseph Dorricott; Cdr Paul Edward Dunn; Cdre Richard Culworth Hawkins; Cdr Colin Ross Mackay; Col John Alexander McCordie RM; Cdr Mark Anthony Pomeroy; Cdr David Shotts; Capt John Stuart Weale

As Members
CPO AET(Av) Garry Alexander Adams; POLogs(P) Jonathan Andrew Crockett; WO1 MEM Paul Wilfred Drewball; CPOLOGs (CS) Mark James Finnigan; Maj Paul Scott Gellender RM; Maj Benjamin Eric Halsted RM; Cdr David Malcolm Harding; Surg Lt Lara Jane Herbert; Chaplain Michael John Hills; CPOET (ME) Christopher Philip Parry; WO2 Philip Albert Shuttleworth RN; Lt Cdr Kevan William Slimmon; CPOAEA (Mech) Ian Macmillan Smith; WO1 (CISS) Julie Marie Wilde

Queen's Volunteer Reserve Medal
CPOAEA (Elec) Christopher Bailes RNR; Lt Cdr Clive Francis Langmead RD RNR

Competition

Winners for the five pairs of tickets to the Yeovilton Air show are:
Mrs E Davies, Buriton Hampshire
Jason Kaye, Cowling, Nr Keighley
Mr D O'Gorman, Cippenham, Berkshire
Kevin Harvey, Market Drayton, Shropshire
P R S Eley, Reading, Berkshire

Talking Navy News goes digital

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number, or email patn-rec@hotmail.com. A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

Reunions

JULY 2009
RNA Falmouth Branch: Sea Sunday has been held for the past 25 years on the third Sunday in July, this year July 19. Falmouth RNA together with the Mayor of Falmouth, the Town Council and the Church of King Charles the Martyr invite you to join us. Parade assemblies at 1020 on the Moor, Falmouth and set off to the church led by the Volunteer Band, HMS Seahawk (RNAS Culdrose) and standards. Service starts 1100. On completion of the service the parade reforms to march to the National Maritime Museum. To assist in planning please contact the secretary for a booking form. Contact Ron Burdakin at RNAFalmouth@msn.com or tel: 01326 221851.

SEPTEMBER 2009
14th Carrier Air Group Reunion Association: The 15th reunion for anyone who served with 804 and 812 NAS, HM Ships Ocean, Glory and Theseus 1946-52, or at any other time, will be held on September 26, at the RNA Club, Royal Leamington Spa. Wives, partners and family members welcome. Further details from Ken Lambert at Lambert5nr@btinternet.com or tel: 01733 234655.

HMS Gambia Association: AGM/Reunion to be held at the Savoy Hotel, Skegness, from September 25 to 28. Contact Hon Sec, Les Newman, 3 Coppice Road, Whitnash, Royal Leamington Spa, CV31 2JE or tel: 01926 831599 for details.

River Class Frigate Association: 24th annual reunion to be held at the Royal Navy Club, Leamington Spa, September 19. Muster at 1100, lunch 1400. Castle-class frigates, Flower-class corvettes plus other escort groups are all welcome – as they all did the same job. This is the 24th reunion at the RNA Club so it can't be bad. Contact Ray Dodd, Clayleaches Farm, Arles Lane, Stalybridge, Cheshire, SK15 3PZ or tel: 0161 338 4298.

River Plate Veterans and Families Association: 70th anniversary reunion at the Royal Fleet Hotel, Devonport, Plymouth

Assignments

Capt S J Murdoch to be Commanding Officer of HMS Raleigh from December.
Cdr T Russell to MWS DDS as CO Defence Diving School on August 3.

Swap drafts

LS(Sea) Johnson drafted to HMS Liverpool will swap for any Plymouth-based ship. Contact jess22@hotmail.co.uk or 07789 402209.

Contact sheet

Ministry of Defence: 0870 607 4455, www.mod.uk
Royal Navy recruitment: 0845 607 5555, www.royalnavy.mod.uk
Veterans Agency: 0800 169 2277, www.veteransagency.mod.uk
Medals enquiries: 0800 085 3600
RN and RM Service records: 023 9262 8779 or 023 9262 8667
Royal Naval Association: 023 9272 3823, www.royal-naval-association.co.uk
RNBT: 023 9269 0112 (general), 023 9266 0296 (grants), www.rnbt.org.uk
British Legion: 08457 725725, www.britishlegion.org.uk
Naval Families Federation: 023 9265 4374, www.nff.org.uk

from September 25 to 27. For further details please contact Jim Smith at lyntondale@toucansurf.com, tel: 01302 841806 or write to Lyntondale, Kirton Lane, Stainforth, Doncaster, DN7 5BP.

OCTOBER 2009
Calling all ex Diamonds: Reunion this year is in Portsmouth at the Royal Beach Hotel, South Parade, Portsmouth, PO4 0RN. For full details contact Ray Shipley at 20 Winchester Way, Rainham, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 8DD or tel: 01634 267084 or Dave Nairn at 21 Binness Way, Farlington, Portsmouth, Hants, PO6 1LD.

HMS Illustrious Association: The annual reunion and AGM will be held at the Ambassador Hotel, Llandudno from October 16 to 19. Details from the Secretary: Diane Coleman at dianecoleman@talktalk.net or tel: 01424 720745.

HMS Jupiter Association: AGM and reunion at the Webbington Hotel, Weston Super Mare on October 3, full weekend rates available. Please see full details on www.hmsjupiter.co.uk or contact Norman Blain at norman_blain@hotmail.com or tel: 07944 10122.

Mauritius Veterans: Reunion for all those who served at HMS Mauritius (shore base) in the 1960s and 1970s. This will be held on October 10 in the WO & SR Mess, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. If you are interested in attending, please contact Tina Lowe at tina.lowe3@ntlworld.com or tel: 01329 843347.

RN Shipwrights & Artisans Association: Annual Dinner & Dance at the Royal Maritime Club, Queen Street, Portsmouth on October 17. For further details contact Brian Moggeridge at brian@moggeridge.orangehome.co.uk or tel: 023 9237 8462 or Clive Sinclair at chasjas@brook.wanadoo.co.uk or tel: 023 9225 1087.

HMS Yarmouth: Reunion will be held in the Inglewood Hotel, Torquay from October 23 to 26. £110pp for three nights (no single supplement). Contact John Bryant, 47 Lavender Way, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, BS32 0LR or tel: 0117 947 0122.

Sports lottery



RECRUITMENT

RADAR/Operator

£Competitive + benefits · Portland Bill

QinetiQ delivers inspired solutions in the defence, security, energy and environment arenas to organizations across the globe. Setting the pace in defence technology, we boast unrivalled facilities for the test and evaluation of aircraft, weapons, submarines, radar and sensors.

A vacancy exists for an RADAR Maintainer/Operator to join the Sea Centre team based at Portland Bill. The team are engaged in the evaluation of Electronic Support Measures primarily for the Royal Navy. The role entails operating the EW CalFac system (from shore or ship) and the conduct of both planned and corrective system maintenance.

A background in high power RF generation and transmission systems, Travelling Wave Tube & Magnetron principles, with an electronics discipline is required. Experience of Naval or other military Electronic Support Measures is desirable. You will also have experience of '1st line' corrective maintenance – identifying faults and installation of replacement modules down to board level.

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For further information or to request an application form please contact WO1 Adrian Stone by telephone on 01980 615363 (civ) or 94344 5363 (mil), or by email to wo-lcg@dolsu.mod.uk or DOLSU-LCG-WO.

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An HQ which is the current maritime component command (MCC) of choice for the NATO Response Force and one with recent operational experience in Afghanistan?

An HQ which includes a Royal Navy two-star deputy commander and 17 RN/RM officers and NCOs?

The HQ in question is Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO – STRIKFORNATO for short (although not very short – Ed).

STRIKFORNATO is little known to many Naval personnel.

Sitting inside the perimeter of Joint Forces HQ Naples, yet reporting directly to Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), STRIKFORNATO is capable of commanding multiple carrier and expeditionary strike groups, to support maritime strike and multi-national amphibious task force expeditionary operations, including US carrier and expeditionary strike groups.

And this has been put to the test in the past few operationally-focussed, highly-demanding years.

In the first part of 2008, the HQ produced the core of the NATO International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) HQ in Afghanistan, and as the New Year dawned STRIKFORNATO stood up as the two-star Maritime Component HQ for NATO Response Force NRF 12.

But what is more, there are opportunities for RN/RM personnel to serve in this unique and dynamic organisation and to live in a fantastic part of Europe.

With a peace-time establishment of 99 staff drawn from ten nations, STRIKFORNATO is commanded by a US commander,

● HMS Chatham refuels at sea during a Noble Midas exercise



based in Lisbon, with day-to-day operational commitments driven by a deputy commander, currently Rear Admiral Ian Corder RN who, during this NATO Response Force Standby period, is also the commander of the MCC.

Other Naval Service personnel range from a RM colonel to an AB, and after the US, the UK has the second largest representation in the HQ – although this is only 17 per cent of the manpower, such is the diversity of the organisation.

STRIKFORNATO is a deployable HQ with staff at five days' notice to move; its operational liaison and reconnaissance team is at 72 hours' notice.

This underpins its role as NATO's only permanently-dedicated High Readiness Force (Maritime) Battlestaff, and the only deployable HQ that is capable of commanding at the expanded task force (three-star) from ashore or afloat.

As such, outside of operational deployments, there are regular

exercises for staff who can and do deploy on to a maritime afloat command platform, usually USS Mount Whitney.

The scalability of STRIKFORNATO has been proved when the recently-formed two-star maritime force was certified as the MCC for NRF 12.

The then commander, Rear Admiral Chris Snow, led the MCC during exercise Noble Midas 08 in the central Med, taking command of a task force consisting of 30 ships and submarines from ten nations in a crisis response operation training scenario, where NATO was appointed by the UN to build up an immediate reaction capability in and around a fictitious country.

The STRIKFORNATO staff, drawn from the US, UK, Greece, Turkey, Germany, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, France and Poland, have a significant array of specialist skills ranging from carrier strike operations to small boat in-shore expertise, and with such a wealth

of experience there are always opportunities to support exercises, courses and conferences, providing worldwide travel opportunities.

With a strong expeditionary background, STRIKFORNATO also leads and hosts the annual Alligator conference, an amphibious seminar which this year was held on board Dutch ship HMNLs Johann De Witt.

The capability and flexibility of the staff was proven last year when STRIKFORNATO deployed half of its staff to ISAF HQ in Kabul – a huge challenge, and not many would have guessed that the core of a NATO HQ in a land-locked country actually came from a maritime HQ.

STRIKFORNATO spent autumn 2007 preparing themselves, the core planning team being led by Brig Jim Dutton RM,

● COMSTRIKFORNATO staff gather on USS Mount Whitney during Exercise Noble Midas 08
Picture: NATO

who with his team pulled together from eight other NATO HQs, showing the proven capability of this small but highly-flexible staff.

The presence of naval staff in a Land HQ also showed the joint utility that is available across NATO, and the lessons learned in Kabul have enhanced STRIKFORNATO's approach to maritime operational planning.

But it is not all operations and exercises; one of the thrills of a posting to STRIKFORNATO is living in Naples, perhaps Italy's most frenetic and vibrant city.

Service personnel and families find themselves amongst the outstanding Roman and Greek architectural sites of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Paestum.

Vesuvius, the only active volcano on mainland Europe, dominates the skyline, and each year the club-swingers organise a 10km run to the summit – all nations are welcome to participate but few can come close to the record-breaking time set by STRIKFORNATO's Maj Fin Walls RM, who completed it in under 45 minutes – anything around an hour is considered good.

The famous Amalfi coast and Sorrento are both less than an hour away, and in the winter the ski resort of Roccaraso is just a two-hour drive.

There are numerous clubs and societies providing recreational opportunities for the whole family, and personnel have access to the US Navy's Carney Park – an extinct volcanic crater with golf course, sports fields, picnic area, play park and swimming pool.

The NATO yacht and dinghy club is also on the doorstep.

There is even a British-run multinational Naples field gun team which runs in the annual competition at HMS Collingwood.

There are other employment opportunities for serving UK personnel in the Joint Force Command HQ itself as well as at the MCC HQ nearby at Nisida.

Those who come here with an open, optimistic attitude love it; many seek to extend their drafts.

The unclassified website www.afsouth.nato.int/organization/STRIKFORNATO/StrikForNATO.htm has links to other nearby NATO organisations and the UK Support Unit.

Take a look, see what you think – or does the family get a vote to spend time in a fantastic part of the world whilst you have rewarding and challenging job in a relaxed NATO HQ?



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Sheffield pays tribute to destroyer

ALL eyes were on Sheffield on a Sunday in early May.

Admittedly, many were on the World Snooker Championship at the Crucible Theatre, but just 250 metres away others were casting their minds back 27 years in paying tribute to sailors lost in the South Atlantic.

Staff and cadets from the Sheffield unit joined veterans at Sheffield Cathedral to remember the loss of Type 42 destroyer HMS Sheffield, along with 20 of her ship's company, on May 4 1982 during the Falklands War.

A wreath was laid at the memorial plaque outside the cathedral, after which standards were dipped and the *Last Post* and *Reveille* was sounded by a bugler from TS Sheffield.

This was followed by a short act of remembrance inside the cathedral, where the ship's bell of HMS Sheffield is mounted as a memorial to the 20 men who lost their lives when the ship was attacked.

The names of the sailors who died were read out, and the Commanding Officer of TS Sheffield tolled the Sheffield bell 20 times, once for each victim.

Two units clean up

TWO units dominated the Grampian District Sea Cadets regatta, held at Stonehaven.

The home team took four of the seven titles – Boys Open, Girls Open and Junior Boys pulling and boat handling (oars) – while the Sea Cadet unit of the year, Peterhead, picked up the other three – Junior Girls and Junior Section pulling and boat handling (power).

The winning teams went on to represent Grampian at the Northern Area event at South Queensferry (boat handling) and Greenock (pulling).

MP calls in on Putney

A DOZEN cadets from Putney unit hosted a visit by their local MP.

Justine Greening is vice chairman of the Conservative Party with the responsibility for youth, and was shown a range of activities as well as given a tour of the unit.

The MP said: "The Sea Cadets offer young people in Putney a wonderful chance to get involved in a range of exciting activities on the Thames, as well as developing their skills and having some fun as well."

Strike up the bands!

WHITSTABLE unit has hosted the largest East Kent District band contest in several years.

Entries from five unit bands and two solo entries from other units involved more than 50 cadets plus adult instructors – including, for the first time in 50 years, TS Lynx from Dover.

TS Vigilant hosted the event at the Gorrell Tank car park, which was partially closed off by the council for the event.

A large crowd of supporters and the general public gathered to watch some high-quality bandsmanship and an excellent display, as well as a variety of styles, in the four competition divisions – solo bugle, solo drum, novice class band and contest class band.

Whitstable's parents and supporters association, aided by unit chairman Dawn Craven, provided a constant flow of hot and cold drinks and snacks on a sunny day – and the buzz is that the cake stall was very popular.

East Kent District Officer Lt Cdr (SCC) Allan Robbins RNR, the guest of honour at the competition, said: "Unit bands are a great way of raising the profile of the Sea Cadets."

"It was very encouraging to see representation from 70 per cent of



● The VIPs' view of the Whitstable Band performing at the East Kent District competition

units turn out at the competition, and I could foresee in the future every East Kent unit having its own band."

The competition winners will progress to the Area Band competition at Portsmouth in September – and Whitstable are a hot tip to take national honours

this year too.

Entries (winners in blue) were:
 Solo bugle: LC Phillip Webb (Whitstable), AC James Goldsmith (Ashford);
 Solo drummer: LC Samuel Martin (Ramsgate), AC Sam Thomas (Herne Bay), AC Phillip Evenden (Dover), AC James Reid

(New Romney), POC Michael Collar (Whitstable), AC James Goldsmith (Ashford);
 Novice Class Band: TS Triumph (Herne Bay), TS Lynx (Dover), TS Invicta (Folkestone), TS Veteran (New Romney);
 Contest Class: TS Vigilant (Whitstable).



● AC Michael Vann demonstrates how to sail a dinghy in the confined spaces of a canal during Loughborough's Canal Boat Festival

Sailing with precision

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Pretty easy, some would say – plenty of space to manoeuvre.

Same goes for the coastal fraternity in the Solent and the like; miles of sea-room to play with.

Try sailing on a canal – no margin for errors there.

But cadets from Loughborough unit proved themselves equal to the task when they staged

demonstrations of the art of dinghy handling at the town's annual Canal Boat Festival.

This year OC Connor Morley and AC Michael Vann took a Topper for trips along the Grand Union Canal, while colleagues gave demonstrations of power boat handling.

Cadets also showed their pulling skills, and there were also fund-raising and recruiting over the two days.

SW takes national crown

SOUTH West Area once again came away with the honours in the National Drill and Piping competition held at HMS Raleigh.

Teams from units have to get through district and area contests before they can compete with the best from around the country.

And the 400 or so youngsters who vie for the trophies at Raleigh produce "an awesome display – brilliant", according to one of the Corps officials who knows the ropes.

For drill events, senior cadets will stand aside and give up to 80 commands for the squad to follow with precision in a display which can last up to 20 minutes.

Those competing for piping awards will have learnt around 20 pipes which again require discipline and precision in terms of length of sounds.

And uniforms must be in perfect condition, with badges worn in exactly the right place.

The South West beat off a challenge by Eastern Area to take the honours in the drill competitions, and while the piping competitions were neck-and-neck between South West and Southern, it was the former who took the overall laurels.

Raleigh win for Laforey guard

AFTER a sixth consecutive win in the Area armed guard competition, the Northampton team were keen to bring home a prize from the national contest at HMS Raleigh.

They did better than that, taking the title for best guard, the prize for best routine, and guard commander POC Jack Mitchell won a trophy for being the pick of the bunch as well.

AC Harry Boyde was also at Raleigh after winning the area competition, and was just shaded into sixth place at the nationals.

Back on the water, members of the Northampton and Wellingborough unit, both cadets and instructors, introducing seven pupils from Standens Barn School to the joys of sailing.

Part of the Royal Yachting Association's OnBoard programme, the four-week course finished with the children picking up a RYA Stage 1 dinghy certificate.

A party of cadets from the unit also had the opportunity to visit carrier HMS Illustrious while the ship was making an official visit to London in support of the Fly Navy 100 celebrations.

As part of a comprehensive tour of the ship, the cadets visited both the galley and mess decks to see what life on board was like.

By way of contrast, they also paid a visit to World War 2 cruiser HMS Belfast and to HMS President, the riverside RNR 'stone frigate' which acts as a training base for maritime reservists in the London area.

But perhaps the highlight of recent weeks was the presentation of the Thomas Gray Memorial Shield to TS Laforey and Diamond, reflecting the unit's position as the second-best in the country after Peterhead unit HMS Caledonia.

Taunton's privilege

TAUNTON unit were privileged to once again provide the Guard of Honour for the town mayor's inaugural dinner.

The cadets were on good form, and their smart dress and impeccable behaviour won them plenty of praise – one of those dishing out the praise was the mayor himself.

Taunton's Commanding Officer, CPO (SCC) Geoff Kerswell, said: "I was very proud of the standard of both dress and behaviour from my cadets tonight."

"We are always honoured to perform our duty at this function, and we wish the Mayor a successful time in office."



Helping hands at Guildford

A WORKING party from the Royal Navy in Portsmouth spent a highly-productive week at the Guildford unit to help make the place a little more ship-shape.

Seven junior rates, led by a chief petty officer and co-ordinated by Capt Chris Air RM, got stuck into the business of refurbishing TS Queen Charlotte over the course of five days.

During their stint they creosoted the unit's boat shed, completely repainted Trimmer Hall – the unit's indoor gym – and stripped out and refurbished one of the unit's older classrooms.

The initiative came from the new Naval Base Commander at Portsmouth, Cdre Rob Thompson,

who provided sailors from amongst the shore-based personnel enjoying harmony time or recovering from injury before heading back to rejoin units of the Fleet.

But that was not the end of it.

On Tuesday evening the party also helped the RN Schools Liaison Team, who gave a presentation on current issues affecting the Royal Navy, after which the youngsters listened to a presentation by members of the RN Museum.

Finally, the cadets were given the chance to look at and handle a number of valuable artefacts brought from the museum.

And even then the sailors were not finished.

On the Thursday evening they hosted a hot buffet supper for a large number of VIPs and local dignitaries to show off their achievements.

The guests were treated to a

presentation by Mike Evans, the Guildford unit chairman, who took the opportunity to increase the unit's footprint in the community, before the RN party were given a tour of the unit, watching cadets training on the water.

Although a trial evolution – it is hoped to roll out this initiative to other units nationwide in due course – the week was deemed a tremendous success by all those who were involved.

Mike Evans said: "We are much smarter than before, and have hopefully tapped into a few potential chequebooks for future funding, too!"

"Thank you very much for your role in this important pilot and please pass on my thanks to all concerned."

"Any time the RN work party want to come back, we will gladly accommodate them!"

● The RN ratings get stuck in to the task of refurbishing parts of TS Queen Charlotte in Guildford

Picture: LA(Phot) Owen King

Petchey Foundation recognises achievement

SEA Cadets from London and Essex were presented with Jack Petchey Achievement Awards at a special presentation evening held at the Great Hall in Kensington.

The second annual awards event honoured 148 young achievers aged 11-25 who were nominated by their peers and selected for a variety of achievements.

All Achievement Award winners received a medallion to go with a framed certificate and cheque for £200, previously presented.

Prize money has mostly been spent on extra resources and equipment.

In addition, 48 adult leaders were honoured for demonstrating, in an outstanding way, an ability to motivate young people.

They received a medallion and a framed certificate.

The awards are worth £30,000 each year to the 45 units actively engaged in the JPF Awards scheme.

Around £1.4 million has been awarded since funding began, including £1 million for the purpose-built training ship TS Jack Petchey (see below right).

Capt Jonathan Fry, Captain of Sea Cadet Corps, said: "The Jack Petchey Foundation and the Sea Cadets have a lot in common."

"We are here to help youth to achieve – what a great partnership we have."

"This is the first time we have ever had representatives from every Sea Cadet unit in London and Essex in one place and we have Jack Petchey to thank for it."

The Jack Petchey Foundation, based in Ilford, aims to help develop the potential in young people aged 11-25 in London and Essex.

Since it was established in 1999 grants of over £50 million have been awarded to a wide range of schools, clubs and organisations.

For further details visit the foundation's website at www.jackpetcheyfoundation.org.uk

Donation spent on water gear

ONE of the Plymouth Sea Cadet units will be kitted out with some new gear, thanks to sailors from the Defence Maritime Logistics School (DMLS) at HMS Raleigh.

TS Manadon plans to use a £1,500 donation to buy lifejackets and oars, allowing cadets to take to the water in rowing boats.

Lt Cdr Ruth Benton, the CO of Manadon, said: "We are extremely grateful for this generous donation."

"TS Manadon has for some time had aspirations to carry out waterborne activities, and now these aspirations will become a reality."

"This money will make a huge difference to our unit."

"I am grateful beyond words."

The money was raised through donations by sailors and other guests who have sampled food cooked and served by trainee logisticians in the DML facility.

WO Terry Casey, DMLS Executive Warrant Officer, recently paid a visit to the unit's HQ at Derriford.

WO Casey said: "I was most impressed with the unit and the volunteers who give up their own time to train the young people."

"A high percentage of Sea Cadets go on to join the Royal Navy and most perform exceptionally well because of the experience they have gained during their time as a cadet."

"With the unit run solely by charitable donations we felt that providing them with this money was the least we could do for a very worthy cause."



● The Sea Cadets Massed Band performs at Edinburgh Castle

Musical cadets make history

SEA Cadets from Arbroath, Dundee and North Shields came together to form a Sea Cadet Massed Band to play Beat Retreat at Edinburgh Castle – the first time that such a band has played at the venue.

The Sea Cadets were asked to perform alongside the Massed Pipes and Drums of the Royal British Legion Scotland.

This honour was accepted by the cadets, who were then given three slots in the programme.

The cadet band marched on to the first slot with *Huntsman's Chorus*, marching through the gates into the esplanade through the ranks of the Pipes and Drums.

The finale – and highlight for many – was to see the band play with the Pipe Majors of

the Massed Bands to the tune of *Highland Cathedral*.

They then marched off to the Sea Cadet tune of *Ready Aye Ready*.

Afterwards, the cadets were praised by the public and the Massed Bands for their performance – and were asked to perform again next year.

Senior Service wins top Regatta trophy



● The race committee get the regatta under way from TS Royalist

THE Royal Navy were the winners of the Shipwrights Trophy at the annual Royalist Regatta on May 13 in aid of the Sea Cadets and the Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

A dozen Sunsail Sunfast 37 yachts raced in the Solent off Portsmouth to raise funds for the charities which support young people by boosting their confidence through challenging

events and experiences.

Sea Cadets aged between 14 and 18 tested their yachting skills against teams of experienced sailors, and while not winning the overall trophy, stole the award for 'Best Dressed Crew'.

The racing, in light winds and strong tides, was a tactical affair, and four of the eight-strong crews were still in contention when the crucial race got under way – but it was the Senior Service yacht, sponsored by Rear Admiral Sir Donald Gosling, which came up trumps and took the Shipwrights Trophy, the main prize on offer.

The regatta involves a great deal of fun and competitiveness, with prizes for other 'achievements' besides winning – including the Bonham Telescope for "the crew most in need thereof".

The Earl of Wessex, Trustee of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and the Countess of Wessex competed in the regatta, and also attended the Royalist Regatta Dinner at Boathouse Number Seven in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, the yachts' base for the event, as well as presenting prizes at the post-race buffet.

Picture: PO(Phot) Amanda Reynolds

Ship launch planned

THE Marine Society & Sea Cadets' new power training vessel TS Jack Petchey is due to be launched at a ceremony this month in Plymouth.

The 16-berth ship was the target of a £2.5 million appeal launched by the MSSC in 2006, marking the organisation's 250th anniversary, and the Jack Petchey Foundation donated £1m towards the total.

The new 24m ship, built by the Bridgend Boat Co in Plymouth, will displace 80 tonnes and have accommodation for four permanent crew and three Sea Cadet watch officers in addition to up to 16 cadets.

Capable of 11 knots, the vessel is expected to be based at HMS President on the Thames in London.

Rapid change of role

One moment they are charging around the docklands of London, the next they are on duty in their best bib and tucker – life in the Sea Cadets is nothing if not varied.

The three with little time to spare are Cdt Joshua McBride, Cdt Benjamin Wood and OC Callum Malone, pictured right in a RIB at the Royal Victoria boating station where they

were competing in the London area Honda RIB Challenge.

They didn't quite win, taking 15th, 16th and 17th place in the course, which covers slalom, circling buoys, man overboard and high-speed manoeuvrability in just over two minutes.

Then it was a quick change, and off to act as a Carpet Guard for the Worshipful Company of Tin Platers at Stationers Hall.



A flying start for Marines section

WHITEHAVEN unit's Marine Cadet detachment have got off to a great start with a 'good' rating at their first Field Assessment weekend.

Only four groups out of the 34 taking part achieved higher ratings.

"This really is a fantastic result," said Sgt (SCC) Simon Gray, Whitehaven's Marine Cadet Detachment Commander. "The first time they take part, most sections will be rated 'fair', or possibly 'satisfactory'."

"For us to get 'good' on our first assessment is a tribute to the skills, dedication and enthusiasm of the cadets who took part."

Each section of eight cadets is assessed against a variety of criteria, including camouflage and concealment, weapons drills, quality of briefing from the cadet in charge and the execution of a section attack, a type of mock battle.

Ratings are based on an overall points score and range from 'poor' to 'superior'.

The highest graded detachment is usually also nominated as a potential recipient of the Gibraltar Cup, an award made to the best Marine Cadet detachment in the UK.

The Whitehaven unit's Commanding Officer, Lt (SCC) Peter Lucas RNR, said that he was extremely pleased with the result, which was not only an excellent achievement for the cadets but reflected well on the quality of the training given by his Marine Cadet Detachment staff.

"I would also like to offer our sincere congratulations to Barrow-in-Furness Sea Cadets, TS Sovereign, who were rated 'superior' in this Field Assessment," said Peter.

Buxton win praise for sailing

BUXTON cadets were congratulated on their sailing prowess at the unit's inspection and annual general meeting at their Silverlands headquarters.

Inspecting officer Lt Cdr Garner RNR also commented on the unit's high standards – two leading cadets had recently been promoted to the rank of petty officer cadets, the highest level a cadet can achieve.

At the AGM Tommy Reddy, a member of Buxton and High Peak RNA, presented a cheque to the unit as a donation towards the cost of the proposed development of the unit headquarters.

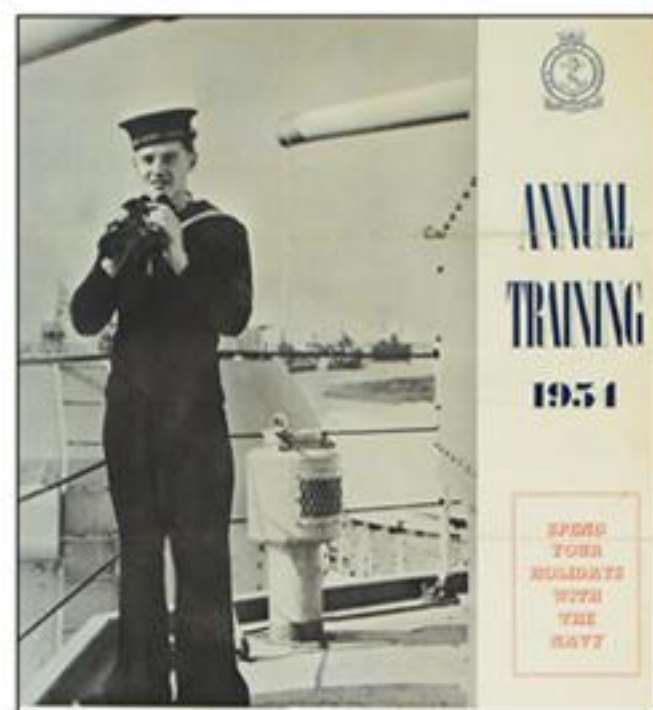
Tommy, aged 83, had some hair-raising experiences while on convoy duty in World War 2.

The veteran has always taken an interest in the Sea Cadets and he previously donated a boat to the unit named Little Tom – his nickname in the Merchant Marine.

As *Navy News* went to press the cadets of TS Bulwark were counting the cash from a flag day street collection designed to boost unit funds.

Any youngsters aged between ten and 18 who would like to join this lively and successful unit and perhaps learn sailing or other such skills should contact the Commanding Officer, Lt (SCC) Bruce Luckman RNR on 01298 78092.

The unit would also like to hear from adult volunteers who could spare some time to help train the youngsters – no Service experience is required, and training can be given.



Alec's poster is returned to HQ

SEA Cadet pin-up boy Alec Read has been reunited with an iconic image from his youth – lost for 50 years down under.

Star of a national poster campaign, the 15-year-old was picked to encourage fellow cadets to train with the Navy as a precursor to National Service.

And his mum was so proud of the clean-cut young sailor pictured in winter rig (above) that she took the poster with her when she emigrated to Australia.

For 50 years the poster lay tucked away in an old travelling trunk as the '£10 Poms' made a new life for themselves near Canberra.

When the parents died, son-in-law Ian Bamford found the still-pristine poster and contacted the Sea Cadet Corps' HQ in London.

Said Ian: "I called Alec and we agreed that the poster ought to be returned to its spiritual home."

From his cattle ranch home in Yass, north of Canberra, Ian told *Navy News*: "When Alec (senior) and Gladys emigrated with their three children, all their worldly goods were packed into a few suitcases and a couple of trunks."

"The biggest wrench was leaving behind in Ellesmere Port their eldest, Alec, who at 24 was settled with a family of his own and a promising engineering career."

"They couldn't bear to leave that poster behind."

Pensioner Alec (below), who joined Ellesmere Port unit in 1948, recalled the moment he was propelled into stardom.

"I just loved my time in the Cadets. We were based on an MTB in the basin off the Manchester Ship Canal, and in those days we had lots of opportunities to get away with the Royal Navy."

"I remember I was on a physical training course at HMS Dido when that photo was taken. I made PO in HMS Jamaica in 1953 and Chief a couple of years later."

"I was there for the launching of Ark Royal, did more sea time in Wizard, and my proudest moment was taking part in the Spithead Review in Illustrious."

"All in all, as a Sea Cadet, I think I sailed in more ships than many of the regular sailors."

The 1954 poster offered courses with qualifications which would benefit cadets called up for National Service.

But there was a final classic irony for the poster boy.

Deferred from call-up through apprenticeship as a toolmaker, when his time came he found himself drafted – into the Army.

"But at least they recognised the value of my seamanship experience," recalled Alec. "I was swiftly posted to the Waterborne Division and did my time as a crewman aboard a tank landing craft."

The globe-trotting poster is now displayed at Sea Cadets HQ.



Food for thought

MEMBERS of the Swansea and Tenby units embarked in South Wales' very own warship HMS Monmouth when she visited Cardiff.

The youngsters spent a night on board, hosted by the frigate's junior rates, then visited various departments around the ship to see how sailors go about their work.

One of the cadets, Ryan Hill, was impressed by what he saw.

"I wanted to be a policeman, but after my visit my head is spinning," he said.

"I'm now very interested in

becoming a Service Policeman in the Royal Navy."

Also on board were two potential RN officer cadets, while a group of Monmouthshire business leaders flew out to the ship as she lay off the coast using the frigate's Merlin, embarking at Cardiff airport.

The business VIPs, like the other guests, saw the ship's company of the Black Duke undergo a series of training exercises in preparation for operational sea training, including small arms firing, air defence, damage control and fire-fighting.



● Swansea and Tenby cadets on board HMS Monmouth

Interest in Iveston

A KEY supporter of marine engineering in the London area has paid a visit to TS Iveston to see the ship's facilities for himself.

The Master of the Worshipful Company of Ironmongers, Richard Poulton, and his wife Sally visited the old minesweeper on the day a Class 2 marine engineering course for students from Thurrock and Chelmsford units was being completed.

Also taking place were an advanced Spinnaker module course for Thurrock, Orpington and Hornchurch cadets and Stages 1, 2 and 3 sailing courses.

The visitors' first reaction was one of surprise at the extent of the facilities provided on board – even with the POs' mess out of action while repairs are carried out.

The pair toured the ship's classrooms and workshops and, after a short tea break, accompanied

PO (SCC) Russell Calver in the unit safety boat to get a closer view of the cadets in the boats.

Later Mr and Mrs Poulton helped Lt (SCC) George Wilson RNR, Iveston's XO, and CPO (SCC) Dickson mark the Class 2 exams – a task in which Mr Poulton had a good deal of experience, having been a headmaster of Christ's Hospital School.

The Ironmongers have provided grants to support Iveston and the

engineering classrooms in the past few years, and the livery company – which traces its roots back to the start of the 14th century – also sponsors two cadets each year on a training course.

The sum of £200 each sends the cadets on their Class 1 marine engineering training at HMS Gannet, covering both mechanical and electrical modules.

Candidates are chosen on the basis of the marks gained in their Class 2 exams for the periods January to June and July to December each year.

The awards for 2008 were delayed, but Richard Poulton has now presented them to L/Cpl Ronald Emery (Bromley) and Marine Cdt Robert Edwards (Harlow).

Ronald is now on staff, which prevents him from progressing further on the cadet side of his specialisation, but he has offered to help other cadets in his unit by making his award available to them to assist their progress through Class 1 instruction.



● Slough Sea Cadets learn the ropes at Kingsmead Sailing Club

Slough fleet expands

SLOUGH unit has launched the latest additions to its fleet of boats at Kingsmead Sailing Club.

The first was the fully refurbished ASC pulling boat, acquired late in 2007 and since completely stripped down, repainted and all parts replaced.

This was made possible by many hours of hard work by unit staff and cadets, as well as donations both in terms of work carried out and finance by local companies and organisations.

To complement the new boat a new trailer was also bought.

The boat was also named *Knot Sanity* in recognition of Slough Citizen of the Year CPO Tony Atkins and the work and time he has put into the Corps in nearly 25 years, *Knot Sanity* being an anagram of Tony's name and very fitting, say those that know him.

This boat will provide training for five cadets at a time, starting at the basic level of crewing and rising up to a standard where a cadet can handle the boat safely and carry out a range of boating skills.

The second boat to be launched was a brand-new Rigidflex 370

powered craft with a 15HP engine.

This boat has not yet been christened, but one or two names are in the frame.

The purchase of this boat was made possible through Sea Cadet HQ funding as well as efforts made by the cadets, committee and staff in fundraising.

The boat will be used to introduce both cadets and adults to the world of power boating, and all participants will have the chance of working towards the RYA powerboat training scheme and awards.



● PORTRUSH Sea Cadets joined other coastal enthusiasts at Whiterecks Beach to spell out the needs for environmental change to protect the coastline. The event marked the launch of TIDY Northern Ireland's Clean Coast programme, in which TIDY NI, in association with Coca-Cola HBC Northern Ireland Ltd, encourages communities to help keep the coastline clear of rubbish

Blazing a trail for the Fife area

TS AJAX took the top places in the RBL Scotland (Fife Area) cadet Standard Bearers competition, held at the unit's HQ in Methil.

AC Shaun Anderson took the honours, with Cdt Charles Simpson as runner up – and success came despite having to

switch from RN drill to Army/RAF drill.

Shaun was due to compete against other area champions for the national title at the RBLs conference in Perth as *Navy News* went to press – a first for the Fife area.

Flower-class veterans support Corps projects

HANDS of friendship reached across the generations for shipmates old and new when Coventry cadets met veterans of the Battle of the Atlantic at their Leamington Spa reunion.

Stalwarts of the Flower Class Corvette Association presented a cheque for £45,000 to the Corps to ensure that the legacy of their tenacious duel with Hitler's U-boats lives on (see right).

The sports hall and students mess at the Corps' new national training centre at Weymouth will be named in honour of the Flower-class crewmen.

The donation, from the estate of Lillian Willis, widow of sailor Ronald Willis (HMS Poppy) was earmarked for the £4 million

project following a ballot of the 900-strong association.

Said treasurer Anne Seymour, daughter of association founder PO Cyril 'Stevo' Stephens (HMS Orchis): "One of our principal objectives is to encourage young people to pursue a career in the Royal or Merchant Navy so this project fitted our ethos perfectly."

Captain of the Corps Capt Jonathan Fry said: "This generous gift will be an inspiration to our cadets commemorating one of the great episodes of RN history."

The sturdy (if bouncy) Flower-class ships, manned largely by RNR and RNR crews, were the mainstay of wartime escort duties in the Atlantic, staving off U-boat attacks to allow the convoy to pass.



The ships that define us

THE Age of Invincible: The Ship That Defined the Modern Royal Navy.

So BBC World Service Political Correspondent Nick Childs entitled his new study of not just Invincible and her sisters but a crucial period of change in Naval policy that set the service on its current course with 'carrier strike' as a key, indeed defining, operational capability, writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.

Not least of the good things about this truly excellent work (*Pen & Sword*, £19.99 ISBN 978-1-84415-8577) is the way that the author has skilfully used the CVS – anti-submarine warfare carrier – story to unlock a key and difficult era in the Royal Navy's history.

He traces the carrier controversy from the 1950s through the traumas of the cancellation of CVA 01 in 1966 to the difficult birth of the 'through deck cruiser' of which the first was Invincible (it might have been HMS Lion, which would have pleased the shades of Lords Beatty and Chatfield).

He covers the development of this 'new genus' of ship with its STOVL – Short Take-Off, Vertical Landing – aircraft (the author prefers V/STOL) and its ski-jump launching system.

Childs contrasts the brief "certain stability", as Lord Lewin put it, in the Naval programme of the 1970s, when two sisters with 'real carrier' names were ordered to supplement Invincible, with the uncertainties of the early Thatcher years when the Nott review promised to reduce the CVS force to two units and Invincible herself was earmarked for sale to Australia.

The author has read the much-maligned John Nott's revealing memoirs and explains well how it was difficult for the hapless Secretary of State to make sense of the different advice he was being offered on what the Navy was precisely for.

Perhaps he might have emphasised even more how Nott was determined to keep the two remaining CVSs and was only forced to press the Australian sale to make further savings forced on him over protests to the Prime Minister that were highly damaging to Nott's future career.

Nevertheless his account is fair and balanced in its analysis of both

The Grove Review

sides of this bitter dispute.

The Falklands altered the CVS calculus greatly and it was decided to keep three 'Invincibles', although perhaps the author might have made it more clear that this did not mean three air groups and three 'running' carriers.

One cannot help but speculate what the shape of current RAN plans would be if Invincible had become HMAS Australia and, if the sale had gone through, how much of the time spent by Invincible in reserve under Royal Navy control would have been contributed actively to the common Commonwealth.

Nevertheless the maintenance of a three-ship CVS force did allow substantial modifications to be made to all three ships in substantial refits that would have been more problematical if only two hulls had been available to meet commitments.

The author demonstrates how the carriers both allowed the Royal Navy to play (quite literally) a leading role in the Western 'Forward Maritime Strategy' of the 1980s and to transform itself into the power projection force of the 1990s and beyond.

He uses my co-authored account of the Teamwork 1988 exercise to lead him into exploiting the testimony of Admiral Ian Forbes (then a most efficient and impressive Staff Operations Officer to Admiral Hugo White) in support of the viability of a forward NATO strategy that always seemed more credible afloat than ashore.

The author also shows how the carriers were 'born again' in support of British forces ashore in former Bosnia. He correctly argues that even in an environment supposedly dominated by land-based air power "a carrier and its task force were that much more flexible, and available, closer to hand and able to react more quickly if things turned nasty on the ground."

It was even more than that. Writing a book on and in Ark Royal as she was 'poised to protect' in the Adriatic in 1994, I found that Prime Minister John Major had emphasised on board



● Two out of three ain't bad... HMS Invincible (nearest the camera) breaks away from HMS Illustrious in the Western Approaches during a rare at-sea encounter for the two sisters in 2005

Picture: PO(Phot) Mick Storey

during a visit how the presence of a totally independent national air support capability was effectively a precondition for the continued presence of a major British contribution to UNPROFOR in Bosnia.

Important lessons on the utility of British carriers were also learned in the Gulf where the ability of a CVS to operate up threat of American carriers showed how significant a British contribution to an air campaign that had not the benefit of host nation support could be.

In these operations the use of RAF Harrier GR7s alongside the Sea Harriers presaged the creation of Joint Force Harrier, the necessary precondition for the current carrier programme.

Childs provides useful detail on the origins of this force and the vital roles played by Admirals Slater, Blackham and Band in

creating it. In his introduction to the book, Admiral Band shows how the Joint Force came to the rescue of an RAF Harrier capability that had lost its primary role in the wake of the Cold War.

Childs also quotes the same source to argue that JFH was also meant to safeguard a fixed wing capability that was no longer sustainable by a smaller RN. It was not surprising therefore that Admiral Band reacted so strongly to recent unsuccessful RAF attempts to go back on the inter-service deal.

The author concludes by showing how the demonstrated utility of Invincible and her sisters set the stage for the acquisition of two much larger aircraft carriers as the centrepiece of the Strategic Defence Review of 1997.

An expeditionary capability fitted the mindset of Prime Minister Tony Blair and his

instinct for interventions abroad – in which the existing carriers played vital roles.

Inevitably the author had to finish in 2008 on a slightly equivocal note as regards the future carrier programme but more recent reports on the extent to which it is gathering momentum give one confidence once more that the two ships will indeed provide a powerful core for the future fleet.

Nick Childs clearly has made it his business to make contact with every figure of significance in this story. As someone associated with the Service over this period it was a delight for me to be reminded of so many historically-significant people I have had the privilege of knowing and their vital roles in the development of the service over the last four decades.

There are endnotes for important sources and it is a real pleasure to congratulate the publishers on this fine and significant addition to contemporary naval historiography. I cannot recommend it more highly.

'I think we have got a runner...'

AROUND mid-day on Tuesday May 27 1941, Winston Churchill stood up in the House of Commons – temporarily displaced to Church House following Luftwaffe raids on the capital.

The war was not going well for the premier; Crete was about to fall, Britain was being pummeled almost nightly by enemy bombers, HMS Hood had been sunk with terrible loss of life, and Hitler's flagship was still on the loose in the Atlantic.

In the midst of his address to Parliament, the prime minister was handed a slip of paper: Bismarck had been sunk. MPs roared with delight, shaking their order papers furiously.

Such is the hutzpah of politicians – and the media. For while the MPs and newspapers tubthumped, the mood of the men who sank the Bismarck was rather more melancholy.

"None of us felt any joy or elation," recalled John Moffat. "We sat in the wardroom, not talking, a stiff drink in our hands, thinking our own thoughts."

'Jock' Moffat had reason to celebrate more than most that Tuesday. On rare occasions, the individual shapes events with truly global ramifications. Moffat's actions 24 hours before did just that.

A torpedo from the junior officer's aircraft struck Bismarck's stern. The resulting explosion jammed the Nazi battleship's rudder and crippled her. The following morning the guns of the Home Fleet wrought terrible revenge for the destruction of the Hood, sending Hitler's flagship to the bed of the Atlantic.

It took a good six decades for historians

to determine that John Moffat dealt the mortal blow to the pride of the *Kriegsmarine* – a quiet, unassuming man, Moffat was not one to make wild boasts or claims. In the immediate aftermath of the fading light of May 26 1941, he had little idea of whether his torpedo among the many bravely launched at the battleship had had any effect, let alone a decisive one.

More than six decades, he has been persuaded to put pen to paper to recount not merely an episode which ranks among the very finest moments of Fleet Air Arm and Royal Navy history. I Sank the Bismarck – a title not of the author's choosing given his modest character – co-written with documentary maker and author Mike Rossiter (*Bantam*, £16.99 ISBN 978-0-593-06352-1) is much more than a description of that legendary torpedo run.

Indeed, it is a window on a bygone world of bravery, fear, comradeship, monotony, of stirring deeds and near misses in war. Of his countless hours in the skies, most, says the Scotsman, were "not the heart-stopping drama of a dive-bombing attack, or the stomach-churning tension of a torpedo run, but long uneventful patrols over mile after mile of flat, featureless ocean."

In an age of GPS, Sat Navs, and a panoply of computer aids, it's worth remembering just how primitive navigation was – and how daunting it was to set off on a three-hour patrol over the ocean. A relatively inexperienced junior officer shared John Moffat's cabin in Ark Royal. After a few days, the author was parcelling up his

personal items – photos, letters – to return to his family. The pilot had headed out on patrol and never returned.

And what also stands out from these memoirs is the variety and scope of the strikes launched by the Fleet Air Arm, particularly around the Mediterranean, many of which have been overshadowed by other historical feats.

There's the blueprint for the Dambusters' raid – a rather less successful and less-publicised strike at the Tirso Dam in Sardinia, using Swordfish, not Lancasters, and torpedoes, not bouncing bombs.

Four 'fish' hit home despite ferocious flak and bad weather, but failed to bring the dam down. It was all a "a pretty ad hoc affair", says Jock. "We had flown in with weapons that had been designed to sink warships, not blow apart concrete walls, using a high level of guesswork." Had something like Barnes Wallis' invention been to hand "we would have blown that dam to pieces."

Tirso wasn't the only frustration in the winter of 1940-41 – there were fruitless hunts for the cruiser Admiral Hipper and battle-cruiser Scharnhorst. Success or failure, elation or disappointment, the fliers let off steam with concert parties where anyone from overly officious officers to Hitler were the butt of many a joke, while Jock Moffat would provide musical accompaniment, sometimes on the banjo, sometimes on the violin, sometimes on the piano.

For all the pilot's melancholy in the wake of the Bismarck's demise, there was one hell of a party for Ark Royal when she returned

to Gibraltar. The cooks served 'Swordfish surprise' in the wardroom, the band of the Black Watch played and the officers celebrated long into the night – "there was an almost carnival atmosphere".

His description of the attack on the Bismarck is as understated – "decidedly unhealthy", "not pleasant" – as it is eye-opening: the Swordfish closing in on the ship as it threw machine-gun, cannon and shellfire at the attackers.

Jock Moffat aimed for Bismarck's bow while his observer told him to wait for the decisive moment to launch the torpedo, then shouted: "Let her go." The pilot did, then manoeuvred the Swordfish out of the maelstrom. "I think," his observer Dusty Miller said, "we have got a runner." And how...

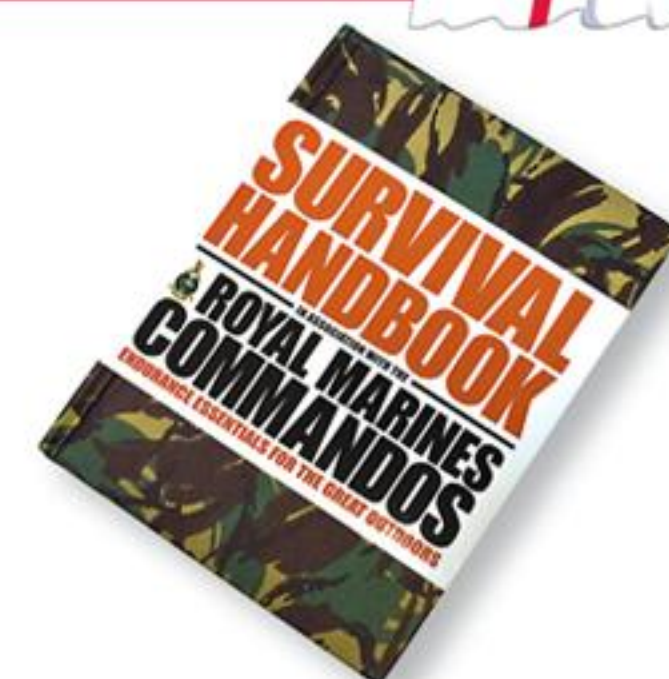
The 'Bismarck chase' came to define John Moffat's life – but by no means in a triumphalist sense. Perhaps it was his torpedo which crippled Bismarck, perhaps not. It was a team effort. They struck not out of desire for recognition, for medals, nor even to avenge the Hood.

"We did it because we were at war and it was our job." The battleship posed a threat to the British war effort and had to be stopped.

Jock Moffat, like most naval aviators, displayed quiet skill and fortitude. Above all, he possessed the British sailor's defining quality: humanity after victory.

"I feel no personal pleasure," he writes 68 years after that legendary encounter. "No matter how pleased I might be to remove a threat to Britain, I cannot take any satisfaction from the deaths of nearly 2,000 sailors."

"There has not been a single day of my life when the image of these poor men struggling in the freezing oily water has not entered my mind."



The art of survival

MUCH as the *Navy News* team like their comfy civilian lifestyles, some people apparently enjoy living on the edge.

Former SAS man and RN chief survival instructor Colin Towell is one. He shares more than 30 years' experience on how to remain fit and healthy – or even alive – in the world's most demanding environments in *Survival Handbook*, officially endorsed by the Royal Marines (who use a good few of the skills continued within).

As with all volumes from the DK stable (£17.99 ISBN 978-1405322362), this 300-page book is crammed with illustrations.

Some of the tips are pretty basic – map reading, putting up a tent, hill walking. But you ignore the basics at your peril...

There are no handy hints on infiltrating enemy territory or blow ing things up (boo – Ed).

But Towell has advice for pretty much every eventuality, from stomping around in your shoes in dewy grass to collect water, to making a shower using a bucket/tin, leaves and a branch, and catching birds and fish for tea.

Of course, sometimes you're the prey rather than predator. Run into a brown or black bear? Stand tall and make yourself as big as the creature to intimidate it, or slink away carefully. Do not run. But if you come across a crocodile or alligator, make like Usain Bolt...

Yes, all the perils and pitfalls of every environment you're likely to come across are included here: on land or sea, on snow or sand, in a canoe, on foot or in a 4x4.

■ THANKS to those nice folks at DK, we have ten copies of *Survival Handbook* to give away – or if you don't fancy your chances, you can buy a copy with a 20 per cent discount.

For a crack at winning, tell us the name of the Devon village which is home to the Commando Training Centre.

Send your entry to Survival Handbook Competition, c/o Sue Sullivan, Navy News, Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH or email your answer to survival@navynews.co.uk.

Closing date is mid-day on Friday August 14 2009; due to shipping costs, UK entries only.

To buy a discounted copy, visit www.dk.com and enter the code VIPbonus in the coupon box at checkout. The offer runs until the end of the year while stocks last.

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● LS(EW) *Abbi Wilson takes the ball into contact with support inbound from Logs T Keni in Cumberland's 30-10 defeat to Valletta*

Trying times for 7s

THE inaugural rugby match for HMS Cumberland's ladies took place in Valletta with the Maltese ladies international 7s providing the Type 22's opposition.

The host team were preparing to take part in the European Championships in Belgium, and were keen to use this game against the Navy as vital warm-up due to a shortage of opposition.

The teamwork and experience of the Maltese was evident very early on with slick ball-handling skills and movement off the ball, leading to two early tries.

Despite the gulf in experience, the Cumberland ladies made their international counterparts work hard for their tries, and with their refusal to give up the visiting side were rewarded with two tries of their own scored by AB(WS) Jade Playforth and RN Ladies player ET(ME) V Vakuruvalu resulting in a final score of 30-10 in favour of the hosts.

Meanwhile, teams from across the RN attended the annual Raleigh 7s tournament, including HM Ships Ark Royal, Montrose, Northumberland, Albion, Chatham and Liverpool.

The Fleet Air Arm, celebrating 100 Years of Naval Aviation, was represented by HMS Heron and HMS Seahawk.

There were three pools of five teams.

Ark Royal were in Group B with HMS Heron, Neptune, Liverpool, and Britannia Royal Naval College and the carrier lads demolished the opposition.

Silver and gold for Red Rose

JUST because HMS Lancaster's back from the Gulf doesn't mean the sport has stopped.

After organising a host of fixtures during the frigate's six-month patrol of the oil platforms, LPT Daz Hoare has maintained the Red Rose's appetite for action.

The footballers lined up against a number of RN sides in the Umbro 5s at Roko in Portsmouth. After the game of their lives against Sultan (a 7-3 win), the Lancastrians went down to Nelson (2-7) and Collingwood (2-9).

The 1st XI fared better against the Fareham base in an 11-a-side match, holding the establishment 1-1 at the break before succumbing 4-1.

In track and field, four personnel were released to compete against other establishments.

AB Berry finished fifth in the 800m and long jump but took silver in the 400m hurdles with a time of 1m 16.53s.

AB Nelson Smith finished fifth in the 1,500m and fourth in the 800m on 2m 28.19s.

LPT Hoare finished with a silver medal in the shot with a throw of 10m 40cm.

S/Lt Southern took bronze in the 800m, then gold in the 400m with a time of 1m 17.03s and silver in the javelin with a throw of 21m 12cm.

He and LPT Daz Hoare have now been chosen to represent Portsmouth at this year's Inter-Commands.

Lest we forget CO Cdr Rory Bryan, he was runner-up in the RN duathlon at Southwick Park.

The quarter-final against HMS Montrose was also a one-sided affair with the carrier team running in unanswered tries in a 34-0 thrashing to step up to the semi.

Next up were Drake, or rather Fiji-Drake with five of the seven Drakes hailing from Fiji.

And they too were defeated by Ark 31-5.

In the other pool, HMS Seahawk had been steadily making progress and the two undefeated immovables met in the final.

And there Ark's good run ended. Seahawk controlled the play with two early unanswered tries.

Ark Royal replied with a try towards half-time but Seahawk again managed to squeeze in another, just in time for the break.

The second-half was again dominated by Seahawk which saw them cross the line three times, but Ark never lost their grit and managed to score once more before full-time 38-17.

It wasn't all an unhappy ending for the carrier, as four of Ark's seven were selected to join the Navy Sharks in the upcoming Bournemouth 7s.

Three times Twenty20

THE opening match of the 2009 Inter-Services Twenty20 competition between the Royal Navy and Army produced 300 runs – a curtain-raiser to a day's thrilling cricket in Portsmouth.

Batting first in warm and sunny conditions, the Army scored 151-6 (Lt S Booth 33, Staff Sgt I Dixon 26), (POAEA K Adams (Nelson) 2-25, Cpl A Pollard (Cdo Logs Reg) 2-31), writes Lt Cdr David Cooke, Secretary RNCC.

In reply the RN early batsmen never really got going apart from C/Sgt S Needham (Cdo Logs Reg) (26). Despite a valiant effort from the middle order (Pollard 25, and Lt Cdr Paul Snelling (Abbey Wood) (23), the required run rate became too much and the Navy fell short of their target by five runs.

The result of the first match meant that the RN had to play the Royal Air Force in the second game of the day.

After winning the toss, the RN captain chose to bat first, but his batsmen struggled to get the ball off the square.

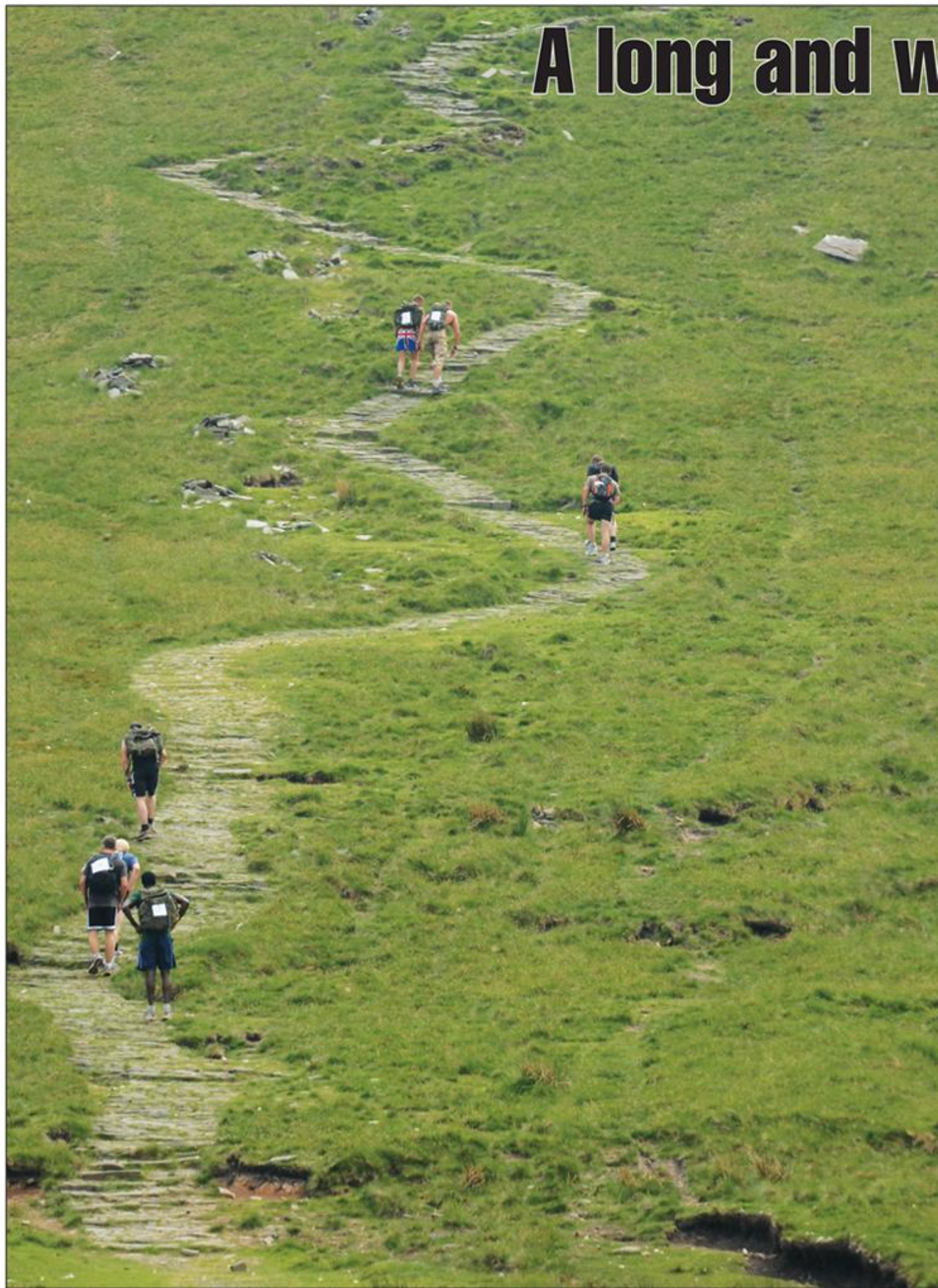
Only Mne D Upton (CTCRM (37) and Pollard (23) made any significant contribution and a final score of 122-9 from their 20 overs should have been within easy reach of the RAF.

Indeed, with their response standing at 114-1 after 16 overs, an early result was expected by all.

However the RN captain invited Upton to continue his allotted overs whereupon the Royal Marine took four RAF wickets for two runs in two overs.

Pollard chipped in with two wickets from the other end and with the score standing at 119-7 at the start of the last over, RAF nerves had firmly set in.

The four runs required were achieved in two further deliveries,



A long and winding path

A PICTURE paints a thousand words – and this one demonstrates better than any verbiage.

This is the inaugural **Beacons Challenge** – a three-discipline adventure race spread over two days in the dramatic and arduous terrain of the Brecon Beacons National Park in South Wales.

The Outdoor Leadership Training Centre – now Powerful Squadron of the Royal Naval Leadership Academy – organised a demanding mountain-eering navigational exercise (pictured left), gruelling off-road mountain bike race, and a gritty open canoe sprint, all of which not only demanded physical stamina but also mentally-challenging decisions and leadership.

Teams of four were invited from all Naval units to participate to combine all aspects of group leadership, a chance to command and motivate a small team under challenging conditions. There was the added incentive of raising money for Help For Heroes.

Minor flaws in micro-navigational skills caused a few back-tracks and head scratching but teams followed in quick succession through the demanding 30km mountaineering phase despite the unusually high temperatures and searing sun on the first day.

After day one the competition leaders were the Royal Marines of HMS Albion 2 followed very closely by the Defence Diving School from Horsea Island.

Day two saw the mountain bikes on the start line for the beginning of a 28km-cycle through the forestry tracks of the area.

Mid point, a 1km diversion across the water of Ponsticill Reservoir in open canoes reached the KIMMS game memory test, set to assess the mental as well as physical agility of the teams, before the sprint for home along the mountain trails.

The winners with an overall time of 4h 57m 36s were the Defence Diving School. HMS Albion 2 were second, Albion 3 took third, with 845 NAS and HMS York taking fourth and fifth spots respectively.

Ladies' haul of fame

Continued from page 48
female featherweight in Britain for the fourth year running.

All in all, the RN ladies returned from the ABA Championships with one gold, two silver and two bronze medals, making them the most successful boxing team in the country.

"All the boxers performed brilliantly and I'm delighted with the results," said the ladies' team coach POPT Stuart O'Connor.

"We are seen by the boxing community as the leading lights in female boxing development and we have displayed today that we are technically capable, fit and dedicated to producing quality boxers. I'm thrilled."

Continuing a good month for ladies' boxing, Lt Emma Garey made history by becoming the first female boxing referee in the Royal Navy.

She gained her referees licence after being assessed by the Referees and Judges Commission of the Amateur Boxing Association of England.

As well as the first referee in the Royal Navy, Emma is one of only five in the country to qualify to this standard.

"I've been involved with Royal Navy and Combined Services Boxing for just over three years but the opportunities to advance myself have been plentiful and have certainly proved to be very exciting," she said.

"I've had the privilege to work under the tutorage of some real legends in the RN boxing community including Lt Cdr Micky Norford and WO Dale Randle.

"Knowing that I'm the first female referee for the RN and following in their footsteps is pretty daunting but I'm looking forward to the forthcoming season."



● Caught and bowled? ET(ME) Sachin Louis reaches for the catch off his own bowling watched by Navy skipper Lt Cdr Paul Snelling during the clash with the Army

Picture: LA(Phot) Luron Wright, FRPU East

a nail-biting finish and a win for the RAF by 3 wickets.

The final match brought back the much-fancied Army side to face a jubilant RAF team.

The RAF batted first and although Cpl M Bray (32) looked to be comfortable, some tight and varied Army bowling restricted the Airmen to 136-7 from their 20 overs.

The majority of the pundits did not consider that total to be sufficient, but the RAF side had other ideas, displaying bowling, fielding and catching of the highest

order. Flt Lt M Compton RAF used his bowlers imaginatively, mixing spin and pace, yet despite a solid effort from Sgt S Houghton (65), the Army were always well behind the required run rate, eventually falling 13 runs short at the close. Compton himself finished with figures of 3-29.

A well-deserved victory for the RAF, winning their first Inter Services Twenty20 Championship.

After that match, the Energy Plus trophy was presented to Flt Lt Compton and Thales mementos

were presented to each of the RAF team and all officials.

For his efforts both with bat and ball, as well as captaining the winning team, Flt Lt Compton was awarded the player of the tournament.

Overall the day was considered to be an outstanding success, enjoyed by players, officials and spectators alike.

Results:
Army 151-6 (20), RN 146-7 (20) – Army won by five runs.
RN 122-7 (20), RAF 124-7 (19.2) – RAF won by three wickets
RAF 136-7 (20), Army 123-7 (20) – RAF won by 13 runs

Aussies did not rule

THE Combined Services squash team claimed two gold medals on their recent tour of Australia.

Competing in the Arafura Games in Darwin, both the men's team and Combined Services No.1 Sam Miller claimed hard-fought gold medals against both the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and numerous other players from around Australasia and SE Asia.

The CS team, comprising 16 of the best male and female players from across the three Services, spent 17 days on tour Down Under, facing a rigorous squash itinerary.

Starting in Sydney, the squad played a team consisting of a mixture of some of the strongest players in the city.

After a close match, the Sydney side eventually proved too strong, winning the match 10-6.

Not to be discouraged, the CS players then flew to Darwin to take on the ADF as part of a three-test series and claimed the first test 6-3.

Then came the Northern Territories Open where each of the players competed individually.

With two players managing to reach the men's semi-finals, Army junior Rich Jones went on to narrowly lose in the final 3-2 against the local No.1.

Next up were the Arafura Games, a huge international competition attracting over 50 countries to compete in over 60 different sports. The tournament included both individual and team events.

The women's team managed to snatch a bronze medal right at the end by defeating the ADF.

The Combined Services No.1 and former professional Sam Miller proved too strong for everyone in the men's individual event. He took gold in a one-sided final against the ADF men's champion.

The men's team were equally successful and claimed the gold medal after a week of difficult matches.

Further success came when the ADF, after losing the second test series, conceded the final test.

Sultan's spoils

The RN fencing championships were held in HMS Temeraire with local teams taking the spoils.

HMS Sultan won the Inter-Unit Team competition, Portsmouth Command won the Inter-Command Team event and the Team event for the Women's Foil.

The weekend proved to be hugely successful for Sultan, who provided eight of the nine fencers that made up Portsmouth Command, especially as the fencing club has only recently been re-established by LMEA Gemma Wollaston.

The team's commitment was recognised in the RN Championships as it provided the largest number of competitors and also took away the most silverware.

Scottish power

HMS Neptune were crowned the best establishment hockey team in the Armed Forces after winning the Inter-Services Cup Winners Cup in Portsmouth.

Neptune played games against the Royal Engineers College (Sappers) and Joint Force Harrier (an amalgamation of RAF Wittering and RAF Cottesmore).

In what was a frustrating first game against the Sappers, Neptune wasted numerous chances to take control of the game. The Sappers fought hard throughout and were awarded a short corner at the death, but failed to score.

Lt Cdr Jamie Wells – Neptune's goalkeeper – was man of the match, without whom the Scotsmen would have surely lost.

Next up were the Sappers against Joint Force Harrier, the game also ended in a draw so the tournament was wide-open.

Once again Neptune had a slow start in the deciding game against Joint Force Harrier. A goal finally came towards the end of the first half which seemed to settle the team. Neptune then pushed ahead in the second half and through sustained pressure scored four more goals to clinch a 5-2 victory.

Neptune was captained superbly throughout by CPO Russ Garner and soundly directed by the RN Scotland Coach Cpl Sam Hartland RM.

2Lt Mcinally RM and Lt Cdr Wells were Neptune's outstanding players of the tournament.

Elsewhere, the full RN team found themselves in a very strong pool – perhaps England Hockey doing justice to Navy Hockey in its Centenary Season – in the County Championships.

First up were Buckinghamshire. The RN paid the price for having played no Hockey in the intervening two months since the Inter Services. A ding-dong battle ensued with Bucks running out 5-4 winners and the Navy feeling that they should have won with all the chances they had created.

The RN were awful in their second match against Suffolk, who were playing their first match of the day. The Navy quite literally ran out of legs on a hot afternoon and one thought then that this was a good Suffolk side which might go on to win the Portsmouth round and qualify for the final.

Day two dawned with a 9am start against Northampton. Again the RN looked a bit rusty – or was it hung over? – but actually they were no worse nor any better than Northants. An even game resulted in the 1-1 half-time scoring becoming 2-1 to Northants. With the RN pushing forward to equalise and leaving gaps at the back, Northants got a lucky break to run out unrealistic 3-1 winners.

To end, another ding-dong game: the RN played Worcestershire at mid-day. 2-2 at half time, 4-4 at full time, there was no doubt that with the exception of the Suffolk match, the Navy boys had been in the running.

As it was they came fourth. Had the Navy been available for a worthwhile training get-together before the event, the result might have been a lot different.

And so to the men's Inter-Command contest in Portsmouth.

The Royal Marines took off fairly sharply and gave notice that they were after 'their' title and 'their' trophy for a seventh or eighth successive season.

Plymouth too fancied their chances and early results showed that they would be performing at a level or two at least above their normal usual fourth or fifth place.

Portsmouth had some stars but the best ones were rusty from sea service and could only manage fourth place.

Plymouth managed second, nicking Naval Air's traditional placing, seven points (two wins and a draw) against two wins and six points for the Air.

Above it all rode the green machine yet again: played four, won four (12 points) while poor Scotland – not a bad hockey playing side – were relegated to fifth without a single win.

The sheer physical strength and fitness of the Royal Marines made the difference (sadly for RN Hockey they were all in Afghanistan for the Inter Services in March where their presence was sorely missed.)

From outdoors to indoors and the ladies' Inter-Command championships with Portsmouth and Plymouth – led by RN stalwarts Lt Dee McKenna and PO Ann Jones respectively – up first. It was the senior rating celebrating at the match's end; she bagged two of the goals in a 4-1 triumph.

Plymouth remained on the 'pitch' as they faced a combined Air-Scotland side.

It proved to be a cracking match – and a tight one. It was settled in Air-Scotland's favour by a single goal from the long-limbed Lt Hannah Mitchell.

A tiring Air-Scotland side now faced Portsmouth in another close match. An unstoppable shot from veteran POET(ME) Cath Wojcik decided the tie – and the championship – with a 2-1 victory for the combined Air-Scottish team.

And finally, this is the month when the centenary of RN hockey reaches its climax over the weekend of July 4-5.

Six matches are lined up over the two days in Portsmouth, the highlight being the 2.30pm clash on the Saturday against England A.

Later that evening the Band of the Royal Marines will perform a Sunset Ceremony at a reception aboard HMS Victory to mark the end of the centenary season. Log on to www.navyhockey.co.uk for more details.



● Anatomy of a save... Neptune's inspirational keeper Lt Cdr Jamie Wells parries a shot from the Sappers during the 0-0 draw

Picture: Keith Woodland, HMS Collingwood

Basketballers restore pride

Continued from page 48

the other Services who have represented Great Britain, the basis for what was in fact another huge effort was built around the strong defensive qualities of AB Logs(Pers) Terri Richards (RMB Stonehouse), AET Ruth Scott (829 NAS) and AB Log (SC) Lauran Williams (Clyde).

Again, the fitness and outstanding skills of AB(CIS) Izzy Molyneux-Jacobs (also Clyde) were in evidence, supported to terrific effect by AB(CIS) Lou Thomas (Exeter). First caps were also awarded to AB Logs (SC) Shemekar Bowens (Neptune) and Amy Durant (Waterfront Portsmouth), both of whom played their part in full.

Having returned to the Inter-Services fold for the past four years, things are getting better each year for a ladies squad which now has a firm coaching and management basis in basketball stalwarts Nigel Cheesman, POPT(RI) Stacy Watt (Collingwood) and soon to be S/Lt 'Spud' Whitaker (Portsmouth Uni) – especially as there are so many players emerging.

With a number of junior players having to double-up this year and with all matches played in the one day, resources were clearly stretched, but the Senior squad came together and collectively put in two quite simply awesome performances.

Leading in both matches they, eventually lost to triple winners the Army by 81-64 and the RAF by just 61-59.

With the ball in hand with just eight seconds to go against the RAF, this last match was by far the most exciting of the tournament and saw the benefit of time on court coupled with strength of character.

Through some smart coaching and a never-say-die approach there were some outstanding individual performances but everyone came together as a team.

Led from the front by new team captain LET(ME) Myron Campbell (Ark Royal), ably supported by LMEA Blair Charles (Sultan), POWEA 'Jack' Paxton (Collingwood), L/Logs(Pers) Judson Cupid (Nelson) and Cpl James Woodcock (RM Poole), special praise must also go to L/Logs CS Hayden Alexander (Liverpool) and Sgt Marty Page (RM Poole), both of whom returned to the playing fold to great effect after a few years' absence.

The aforementioned Zac Porter stepped up into the Senior squad as did Mne George Morris, who set a fabulous personal example having literally stepped off the plane from a six-month tour in Afghanistan to represent his Service – a brilliant effort.

The next key date in the RNMBBA calendar sees the Senior squad participate in a high-level pre-season invitation tournament in Truro over the weekend of August 28-30, although sports development basketball sessions also take place at Raleigh on the first Saturday of every month.

Under 19s are Dallas wow-boys

THE Under 19s squad headed to Texas for the 29th consecutive year to compete in the Dallas Cup.

Teams from across the globe take part in this prestigious youth tournament – including Man City, Sao Paulo and AC Milan.

Staff and players were hosted by local families, some of which have been involved for more than 15 years.

It was down to business on the second day with a friendly against local side, (and tournament competitors) Solar SC. The 'scrimmage' as the Americans call it, was a game of three 30 minute periods – a chance for both managers to use all the squad players.

Still suffering from a six-hour



Onside with Lt Cdr Neil Horwood, RNFA

time difference, the Navy side adjusted quickly to the US style of football and deservedly won the game 3-0.

On to the cup and the RN's first group match came against Texas Lightning Blacks at the Richland College Soccer Complex.

The pitches were in perfect playing condition and despite the excessive wind it was a perfect day for football and a perfect start for the Navy.

Set pieces played an important role in the game and with goals from AET Sam Buckler (Seahawk),

AET Tony Musumeci (Heron) and NA David Devlin (Seahawk), the Navy side dismissed the 'Blacks' and sealed three points.

Twenty four hours later, the sailors were at Pizza Hut Park for their next game against LAFC Houstonians (Chelsea) – an American academy club side affiliated to Chelsea FC.

A team playing in a Chelsea strip were by association, likely to be good – and they were. At half time, LAFC were winning 2-0 despite the Navy side having the majority of the play. A spirited

half-time team talk inspired the Navy to a well-deserved draw. With the wind against them, goals from AET Marvin Brooks (820 NAS) and ET 'Ricky' Hatton (Neptune) levelled the score and despite desperate attempts from LAFC to grab the win, the Navy's defence remained solid.

The final team in the group were Orlando FC, another academy side, this one affiliated to QPR and coached by ex-professional David Bardsley.

Orlando needed to draw against the Navy to see them through to the quarter finals – only a win would secure the Navy's place.

The first half saw both teams goal-less despite several clear chances by the Navy. Ten minutes into the second half, Orlando breached the Navy's solid defence and scored a well-worked goal.

Behind once again, the sailors fought back and scored two late goals to clinch the win. Goals from ET Craig 'Ricky' Hatton and five minutes later, AB Ross Hoyland (Sutherland) sealed their quarter-final place.

For the first time since 2003, the Navy had reached the quarter finals and were drawn against the Dallas Texans. The Texans were the state champions and had won all their group games.

Once again at Pizza Hut Park, on a perfect playing surface, the young Navy side faced an American team with an excellent reputation. The Navy made a nervous start and were punished by an early goal from the Texans. 1-0 down at half time, the Navy came back on to the pitch still playing like the better side, but could not finish their attempts on

goal. The Texans were awarded a penalty 15 minutes from time to make it 2-0 and a third goal five minutes later made it 3-0. The Navy still battled on, never giving up, displaying the fighting spirit they had shown throughout the tournament. The match ended 3-2 after a late consolation goal by AB Graeme 'Ruby' Murray (Argyll).

There was obvious disappointment for the staff and players, but after playing some superb football over the tournament, they could be proud of what they achieved. The Texans went on to win the competition.

In between training and competitive games, the squad visited downtown Dallas, an NBA basketball match between the Dallas Mavericks and Utah Jazz, and paid their respects at Dealey Plaza where JFK was assassinated.

Next month

SPORT

Kite fantastic

LOOKS fun doesn't it? This is kitesurfing – and this is Royal Marine Lt Scully, one of 11 RN and RM personnel who headed to the Canaries for the inaugural kite camp.

As the name implies, the sport is surfing harnessing the power of the wind (the kite is out of shot here, sadly).

With the first tri-Service kitesurfing contest due to take place later this summer, the small band of sailors and marines who've taken up the sport decided to head south to practise (courtesy of some dosh from the RNRM Sports Lottery).

Fuerteventura in the Canaries is kitesurfing's Mecca thanks to the favourable winds.

It also means that aside from the Senior Servicemen there were a lot of other riders (not to mention some unforgiving reefs).

The important thing was that the wind held for six days – which it did.

And that meant that the riders could hail their first training camp a success – enough of a success to spark plans for "something bigger and better next year".

More details can be found at www.kitenavy.com or from Lt Cdr Bob Bowman at bob.bowman283@mod.uk.



A work in progress – stunning cutaway of HMS Amethyst (we'll finish painting her in time...)



Portland rocks – Seawolf test in the Med



All the action from Yeovilton Air Day



From storm front to front line – how the weather dictates RN operations

A HAUL of five medals – including a gold – cemented the Royal Navy as the best female boxing team in the land.

They can claim that title after their performance in the Women's Amateur Boxing Association National Championships in Manchester.

Seven naval ladies stepped into the ring for the competition, with three knocked out at the semi-final stage: Lt Cdr Sollitt (DLO Andover), AB Bowens (Neptune) and AB Locke (Bulwark) lost on close points decisions to their civilian opponents, nevertheless securing well-deserved bronze medals for the team.

That left four RN competitors in the finals: PO(ET) Teeling (Collingwood), PO(ET) Palin (Cornwall), AB Ingman (Kent) and Lt O'Connor (Temeraire).

PO(ET) Teeling participated at the novice class C category at 51kg and faced former Dutch kickboxing champion Shekira Lea (Waltham Forest ABC).

Despite limited boxing experience, her kickboxing past would prove to be a challenge for Teeling.

Using her speed of shots and intelligent movement Teeling managed to fend off the stronger opponent for the first two rounds. The kickboxing experience paid off in the last round however to secure a points victory, leaving the Navy boxer with silver.

PO(ET) Palin faced Jodie Brierly (Chadd ABC) in the Class B novice 75kg category. Towering over her opponent, Palin was forced to ride an initial rush from the smaller boxer – and managed to evade her early attacks.

Surprisingly Palin was down by a point after the first round so she set out positively in the second round picking off her opponent successfully as she charged forward.

Despite reversing the points deficit clearly in the second round disaster struck as Palin sustained an injury in the dying seconds



● Seven belles (plus one bloke – coach POPT Stuart O'Connor) who brought back a medals haul from Manchester

of the round and was forced to retire. A proud performance saw Palin return with silver on this occasion.

At 46kg, the smallest of the RN contingent, AB Ingman won a bye through to the final. After a considerable training programme unfortunately Ingman's only opponent pulled out leaving her with a walkover, but as she had not competed in the competition, no medal. Unperturbed by this temporary disappointment, Ingman is a talented young boxer and one to watch for the future.

The last of the Navy's competitors, Lt O'Connor was not unfamiliar with these circumstances as this was her fifth

ABA Championship Final.

Pitched against a strong opponent Hayley Webb (Met Police), O'Connor needed to win to secure her position in the international squad and her British ranking.

All the pressure was on the naval officer as she stepped into the ring to defend her title. It was a cagey start with feints and speed of shots from both boxers.

The policewomen adopted a counter-boxing style while O'Connor stalked her opponent around the ring.

The points were even after the first round and O'Connor knew she had to step up her game if she was to secure the win.

Forcing her opponent to miss, the sailor capitalised on the mistakes and scored her shots throughout the remaining rounds to secure a close but decisive points victory.

"I thought it would be a close fight. Hayley is an awkward counter-boxer and I couldn't afford to make mistakes. I knew I had to be patient and pick my shots, thankfully I stuck to our game plan and it paid off" said Lt O'Connor.

All the more impressive, this win makes it four consecutive ABA titles for the naval officer and secures her ranking as number one

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Basketballers restore pride

AFTER a generally poor display at the 2008 event and the unavailability of many key players Senior Service expectations for this year's Inter Services Basketball tournament at RAF Cranwell in late April were not high, writes Cdr Rob Knill, Chairman RNMB.

However, through good coaching, man management and with a set of players who were all really keen to play as a team, results at all levels were most encouraging and bode well for the future.

With many of our younger Royal Marine players still returning from their six-month tour in Afghanistan, numbers for the junior squad in particular were down, but they put in some huge performances.

Losing both matches – to the Army by 60-49 and to the RAF 45-31 – had the new men's coaching team of WO1 'Sid' Nicholls (HQ Navy Command) and POMA Matt Berry (RH Gibraltar) been given just a little more time to build on the team's awesome defensive effort both results could so easily have been different.

There were some outstanding displays across the board, chief amongst them being Mne George Morris (42 Cdo) who distributed the ball exceptionally well, LET(ME) Ben Whittaker (Cumberland) and AET Zac Porter (820 NAS), whose height came to the fore both in defence and attack.

ET(ME) John Pearson (Tireless) provided some much-needed power and determination alongside new find LPT 'Scouse' Reeves (Collingwood) and L/Cpl Dale Solf (JHC Yeovilton). A richly-deserved new cap was also awarded to AB (CIS) 'Irish' Ireland (Chatham), who is certainly one for the future.

Missing that essential basketball ingredient of height, the Ladies squad also found it pretty tough going but stuck to their task with terrific resolve losing their matches 28-60 to the Army and 33-80 to the RAF.

Tested by players from

Continued on page 47



100% NEW LIFESTYLE. NEW ZEALAND. NAVY

See page 39 for information on the exciting new opportunities available now.

Dawn of aces

The birth of naval aviation

Part 1

A DARING EXPLOIT

ZEP SHED DESTROYED

BIRTH OF BOMBING

FRIDAY October 9 1914 dawned misty.

The mechanics tinkered with the 100hp Gnome Monosoupape engines, fine tuning them.

All night long the Sopwith Tabloid biplanes, Nos.167 and 168, sat in the field outside Antwerp. All night German shells had whistled and whined overhead before crashing down somewhere in the Belgian port.

For three weeks, the men of No.1 Wing, Royal Naval Air Service, had endured a nomadic life – “always on the go,” one of its number recalled, “without a home, without any idea where we were going to next, without food sometimes, and yet we had kept going.”

But constantly keeping going was gnawing at the nerves. Squadron Commander Spenser Grey was becoming increasingly impatient. The 25-year-old officer was a natural airman – he had earned his wings after barely half a dozen flights. Natural airman or not, he could do nothing about the overcast sky.

Today's flight would push the Tabloid's 3½-hour endurance to its limit. The days were drawing in. Shortly after 1pm, Grey took a fateful decision. He gambled on the weather.

Twenty minutes later, No.167 rolled down the field and into the leaden sky. After a ten-minute interval, No.168 followed.

The single-seat scout was the finest British warplane of the day. Its rate of climb – 1,200ft per minute – and a top speed of over 90mph marked it out from its contemporaries. What counted today, however, was its ability to carry a payload, two 20lb bombs.

Grey in No.167 set course for Cologne, 115 miles away, a little over an hour's flying time. His orders were precise – attack the Zeppelin sheds. His directions were not. Intelligence said the mighty airship hangars were to the north-west of the city. Or perhaps they were to the south.

Like Antwerp, the great Rhine city was shrouded by a blanket of cloud. Grey brought his Sopwith down to 600ft and began to scour Cologne for the sheds. He circled the city for ten, maybe 12 minutes. The German guns – yet to earn their nicknames Archie or ‘flaming onions’ – barked constantly.

Spenser Grey could not find the Zeppelin sheds. He could find the *Hauptbahnhof* – Cologne's central station – its platforms and sidings crammed with trains. He dropped his two bombs and turned west.

Twenty miles to the north Lt Reginald Marix circled the city of Düsseldorf trying to get his bearings. For the past hour or so he had hugged the tree tops of first Belgium, then Germany. Now he sighted the great *Luftschiffhalle* – airship shed – and manoeuvred his Tabloid for the kill.

A fortnight before naval aviators had tried to strike at the wooden shed – one, Lt Charles Collet, had even hit them, but the bombs had failed to explode.

The Germans had learned the lessons of September 22. Machine-guns were mounted on the roof of the shed and *Fliegerabwehrkanone* – flak – hurriedly moved in to place around the site.

Marix dived to 600ft, hurled his two 20lb bombs at the huge structure. One, or perhaps both, explosives smashed through the roof and struck LZ25, a veteran of bombing and



● ‘It would be difficult to find, in the world's history, any body of fighters who, for sheer gaiety and zest, could hold a candle to them’... The glass plate has faded slightly over the years, but not the deeds of these aviators of the Royal Naval Air Service, posing beside their aircraft in the summer of 1914

scouting raids on the Western Front. The Zeppelin's canvas bags which gave the airship its lift were inflated. Upwards of 800,000 cubic feet of hydrogen exploded. Flames raced 500ft into the air. The shed roof collapsed. A German mechanic was killed. Only the aluminium frame of LZ25 survived. The metal supports holding her payload melted “in the blowtorch heat of burning hydrogen”. The bombs, unfused, dropped harmlessly on to the shed floor.

Only now did the guns open fire, peppering Reggie Marix's Tabloid – but not fatally. He made for Antwerp, only to run out of fuel 20 miles short of the port. The aviator put his plane down in a field, borrowed a bicycle from a Belgian peasant, then borrowed a Belgian car and returned to the airfield – where he was “heartily congratulated”. He would return the next day with cans of petrol to collect his downed bird.

Events would overtake Reggie Marix. That night the airfield was bombed by the German guns, the Hun swarmed into the woods which surrounded the British outpost. Shortly before midnight, the aviators withdrew in two cars and headed for Ostend.

“We celebrate this victory because it takes us one giant step closer to our victory,” sneered the correspondent of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. The fall of Antwerp was a blow to British morale, but Fleet Street found hope in the “thrilling story of a plucky exploit” – the raids on Düsseldorf and Cologne.

Two pilots. Two heavier-than-air craft. A mere 80lbs of bombs dropped. But two naval aviators had demonstrated the potential of air power – and given birth to strategic bombing.

A NEW ENDEAVOUR

THEIR LORDSHIPS ACT

MAYFLY – BUT DIDN'T

Twenty years before such a “plucky exploit” would have been unthinkable, more H G Wells or Jules Verne than the heirs apparent of Nelson. Ten years before such a plucky exploit would have been unthinkable; man could fly, but he had never stayed aloft more than five minutes. Even five years ago such an exploit would have been unthinkable. No British sailor had taken to the skies. The Admiralty had set aside £35,000 for the construction of an airship, but it possessed not a single heavier-than-air craft.

No decade in its long, proud history has so shaken the Royal Navy to its core than the first ten years of the 20th Century.

There were revolutions within the Service – ‘Jacky’ Fisher woke the Navy from the slumber of *pax Victoriana*, axing scores of aged ships and forcing through plans for a revolutionary all-big-gun battleship, Dreadnought.

And there were revolutions without – the submarine had been perfected by Irish-American inventor John Philip Holland and the navies of the world were taking note, Britain's among them. In the dying days of the old century, the Admiralty committed £175,000 to five submarines. In the burgeoning days of the new century, HM Submarine No.1 – Holland 1 in popular parlance – was laid down at the Vickers yard in Barrow.

Holland 1 and the Dreadnought were technological marvels – and hailed as such. But nothing fired the Edwardian public's imagination more than powered flight.

Since the Wright brothers' short first flight on a December day in 1903, each year had brought fresh achievements in the skies:

1904: first circuit, first flight of more than five minutes;

1905: flight of just under 40 minutes;

1906: first powered flight in Europe;

1907: first flight in the UK; first flight of an Army airship.

The year 1908 witnessed a succession of firsts: the first passenger, the first female pilot and, ominously, the first fatality. It also saw the US Army place an order for its first heavier-than-air craft.

The Admiralty, however, remained to be convinced, haughtily dismissing an offer of machines from the Wright Brothers: “Their Lordships are of the opinion that they would not be of any practical use to the Naval Service.”

Their Lordships may have dismissed ‘aerial navigation’ – but their Prime Minister had not. Henry Herbert Asquith was perturbed by the progress made in France, Germany and America, and by the substantial sums they were pumping into the development of ‘dirigible balloons’ – airships – and aeroplanes.

The aeroplane was still a weapon for the future, but the dirigible balloon was a far more immediate threat. No nation was more skilled in the use of the airship than Germany; the military quickly snapped up two Zeppelins – named for their aristocratic inventor.

In a few years, H G Wells predicted, fleets of German airships would lay waste to cities, raining bombs from the skies, leaving “ruins and blazing conflagrations and heaped and scattered dead – a furnace of

crimson flames, from which there was no escape”.

The Zeppelin terrified Wells. It inspired a German contemporary, Rudolf Martin. “The future of Germany lies in the air,” he tubthumped. Airships could carry “40,000 men from Germany to England in a single night. At one stroke, England's superiority which she's enjoyed from the year dot would be wiped out.”

Their Lordships did not read Rudolf Martin. They probably never read H G Wells, but they did heed the message. On Friday May 7 1909, they accepted a tender from Vickers to build Her Majesty's Airship No.1 for £35,000.

Airship No.1 – dubbed the Mayfly, a name which stuck and was remarkably prophetic – was “an immense dirigible”, the correspondent of the fledgling *Flight* magazine enthused – 170 yards long, 16 in diameter, a crew of around 25, a top speed of a little over 40mph. It took 11 freight cars carrying hydrogen bottles to fill the 700,000 cubic feet of space in the sacs to give her the lift she needed.

It wasn't enough. Mayfly was too heavy – a problem, perhaps, not helped by some rather odd features demanded by the Admiralty, who required anchors and a capstan installed.

Long before sunrise on May 22 1911, 300 sailors and tugs hauled the leviathan out of the floating shed at Cavendish Dock in Barrow and thus was launched the Mayfly.

For four days, the airship was moored to a mast, while a handful of crew experienced life aboard and experts observed the Mayfly's behaviour.

And she behaved quite well.

Life aboard was rudimentary but acceptable, while the craft withstood gusts of up to 45mph. What she did not do was fly.

Returned to her shed, she underwent four months of modifications – she was even stripped of her keel to reduce weight.

It was to prove a fatal flaw. When HM Airship No.1 emerged again on September 24, she was caught by a gust of wind, twisted, rolled back. Her centre buckled and snapped. The crew in her gondolas “had a most exciting time” (those in the rear one jumped out into the water).

And that was the end of the Mayfly. She quietly rotted away in her shed before being broken up. She was, declared Admiral Doveton Sturdee, who headed the official inquiry into the flop, “the work of an idiot”.

FIRST OF THE FEW

THE PIONEERING SPIRIT

FATHER OF NAVAL FLIGHT

Idiots. Mavericks. Pioneers. Adventurers. Daredevils. The first decade of aviation embraced them all. Whatever their Lordships might think, they could not dampen the ‘passion for wings’ which seized Britain in those early days of flight.

A handful of naval officers dipped into their own pockets to pay for flying lessons – one even went further and bought an aeroplane outright.

But when free flying lessons with the Royal Aero Club at Eastchurch were offered, even their Lordships could not turn their noses up.

More than 200 officers volunteered; four were chosen. On the second day of March 1911 Lts Gregory, Samson, Longmore and Lt Gerrard RM arrived in Eastchurch for a month's ground instruction before taking to the Sheppey skies.

None of the four stood out more than Charles Rumney Samson. ‘Sammy’ Samson looked every inch the typical officer of the day in formal portraits – handlebar moustache, slicked-back hair. Yet there was also something of the renegade about the stubby figure: a goatee beard, a blunt manner, a fiery temper, a boxing title. What Sammy Samson possessed above all else was passion.

With the Lordships still under a cloud following the Mayfly débâcle, Samson was ushered into the office of First Sea Lord Sir Arthur ‘Tug’ Wilson to plead the case for naval aviation.

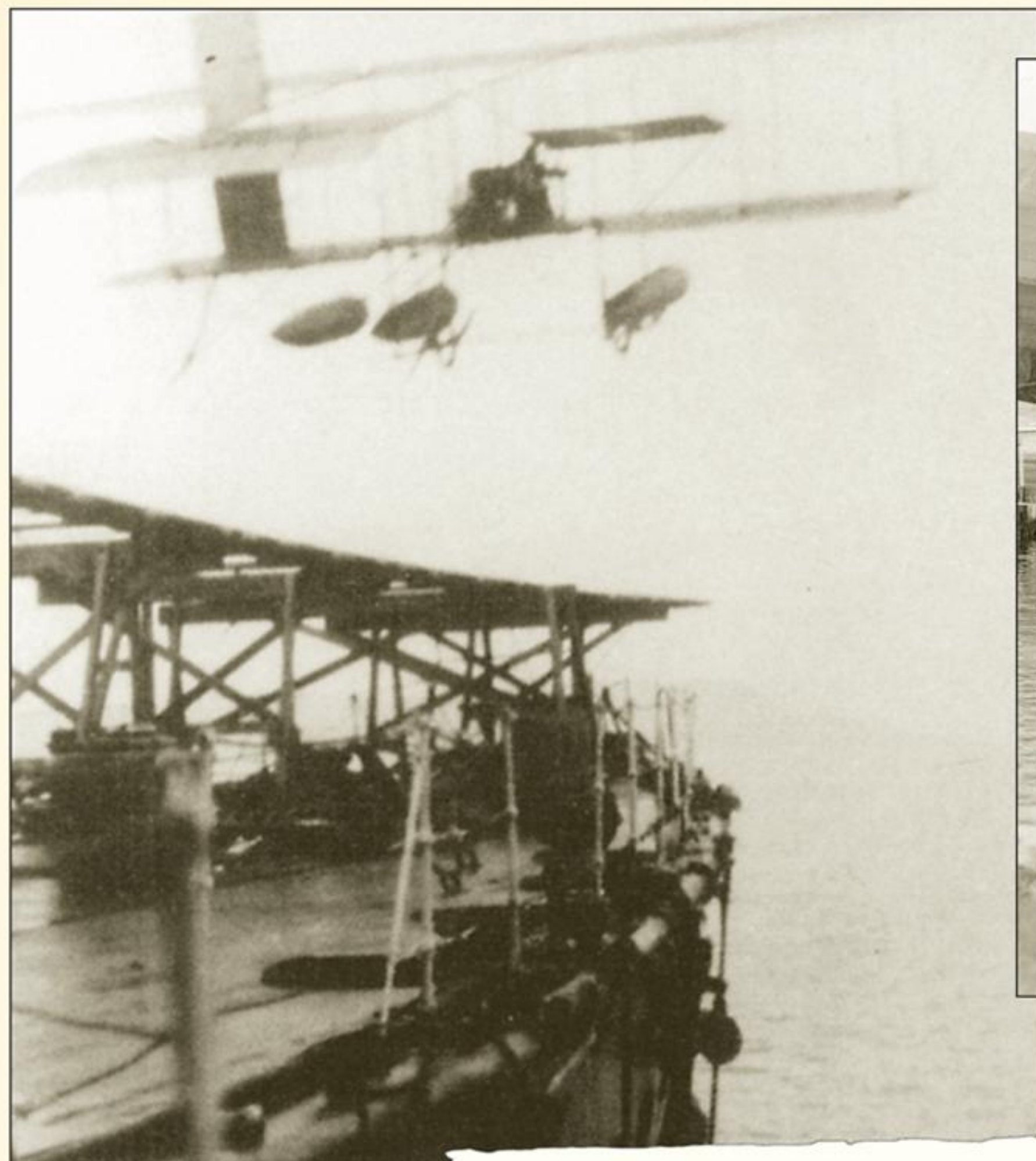
Wilson was a fearsome character – and a brave one. He had fought the ‘fuzzy-wuzzies’ in single combat in the Sudan – and earned the Victoria Cross for doing so. Bravery was one thing. Technology was another.

Tug Wilson didn't think much of the submarine – “underhand, unfair and damned un-English”. He had called for an end to the Navy's dabbling in airships after the Mayfly fiasco. He didn't think much of the aeroplane either. “I don't see much use of it for the Navy for some years to come,” he told Charles Samson. But Samson could be persuasive. “Let us go on flying,” he urged the admiral, outlining plans to build a seaplane. All he needed was a dozen men and a bit of money. “I will prove it possible to fly off a ship in six months.”

Wilson was won over – and Charles Samson was as good as his word. On January 10 1912 the flier lifted off from a 100ft ‘runway’ built over the 12in guns of HMS Africa at Sheerness – just, missing a buoy by about three inches.

Having cheated death, Samson circled the battleship several times as its sailors cheered, before putting his

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● First flights – with varying degrees of success... (Left) Charles Samson – the father of Naval aviation – lifts off from HMS Hibernia in Weymouth Bay, the first take-off from a ship at sea and (above) sailors survey the twisted, broken fuselage of HM Airship No. 1 – ‘Mayfly’ – after it was wrecked by a gust of wind while being removed from its shed in Barrow

Continued from page i

heavier-than-air-craft down on land. Samson's steed was the Short Brothers' S.27 – a powered box kite biplane which didn't look very much different from the Wright Flyer. A Gnome 50hp rotary engine pushed – for it was mounted behind the pilot – the contraption through the skies.

All through the winter and spring of 1912, Samson and his men experimented. They replaced the Short's wheels with flotation bags. They took off from water. They landed on water. And, on May 2, with the Fleet gathered off Portland for a Royal review, Samson became the first man to take off from a ship under way – HMS Hibernia, making 10½ knots.

More was to follow: the first message by wireless between aircraft and ship, aerial photography, reconnaissance flights, dropping a bomb. By the year's end, the Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps, as it was now known, boasted nearly two dozen trained pilots and more than a dozen aircraft. Yet for all the innovation, for all the achievements, the Royal Navy – and the UK – lagged far behind the two Continental Powers. In 1912, spending on military aviation by Germany and France – the latter especially – outstripped Whitehall's £600,000 investment (of which the Admiralty accounted for a paltry £34,000).

Though it had little money, the Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps possessed men of vision. Men like Samson, yes, but it also needed advocates in the corridors of power. Churchill was one – he even learned to fly; Jacky Fisher – until he retired in early 1911 – was another.

The pivotal figure in the first decade of naval aviation, however, was one Capt Murray Sueter, the head of the fledgling air branch. Sueter was brilliant but temperamental – and conceited. He claimed credit for many innovations which were his own – and for a good few which were not. But just one year after the first naval pilots flew, he laid down principles which would define their role – and that of their successors – for the coming century.

The task of a naval air force, Murray Sueter argued, would be to locate the enemy fleet; to find and destroy enemy submarines; to defend the Fleet from air attack; to defend the harbours and port installations from air attack. To this end, said Sueter, the Navy needed a chain of 'aeroplane stations' from Pembroke to the Cromarty Firth.

In 1913 the first station – on the Isle of Grain, Medway – opened. More followed at Calshot, Felixstowe, Yarmouth and Cromarty. And that same year appeared the first 'station at sea' – HMS Hermes, a seaplane carrier which could launch and recover aeroplanes at sea.

The ship joined the Fleet for trials. She did not, however, join the Fleet for its regular display of naval might in the Solent – but her aircraft did.

Between the 40 miles of ships, the dreadnoughts and battle-cruisers,

"The recruits of the air were young, some of them no more than boys. Their training lasted only a few months. They put their home life behind them, or kept it only as a fortifying memory, and threw themselves with fervour and abandon into the work to be done. Pride in their squadron became a part of their religion. The demands made upon them, which, it might reasonably have been believed, were greater than human nature can endure, were taken by them as a matter of course; they fulfilled them, and went beyond. **They were not a melancholy company;** they had something of the lightness of the element in which they moved. Indeed, it would be difficult to find, in the world's history, any body of fighters who, for sheer gaiety and zest, could hold a candle to them. **They have opened up a new vista for their country and for mankind.** Their story, if it could ever be fully and truly written, is the Epic of Youth."

– Sir Walter Raleigh, official historian of the war in the air

the myriad of destroyers and cruisers mustered off Spithead in mid-July 1914 there was a new addition – "a gaggle of seaplanes" bobbing around off Gilticker Point.

This was the first public display, en masse, of the newly-renamed Royal Naval Air Service. Its numbers were still small – 52 seaplanes; 39 aeroplanes; six airships; 128 officers and 700 men – but its potential was there for all to see.

A seaplane buzzed the Royal Yacht Victoria and Albert, while Samson and his pioneers dropped smoke bombs as they flew in formation above the maritime phalanxes.

The Fleet had mustered to test its ability to mobilise in the event of war. It would not demobilise for more than four years. The clouds of conflict were already gathering.

THE TEST OF WAR FIGHTS AND FLIGHTS THE MOTOR BANDITS

Bernard Isaac had spent the summer of 1914 doing what most well-to-do chaps of the day did: playing golf and tennis. His day job bored him. Fate would not deny him all the excitement he wanted.

When the German Army invaded Belgium, it followed its masterplan, named for its author Schlieffen, to deliver victory over France.

The Schlieffen Plan might deliver victory over France. It definitely brought Britain into the war. Bernard Isaac was inspired by the 'spirit of August', swept away by the wave of patriotic fervour.

Isaac volunteered for the Royal Naval Air Service, was interviewed by Charles Samson himself – and offered a commission as a sub-lieutenant. Within a month, with the scantest of training or immersion into naval life, Bernard Isaac was in Belgium.

It was a heterogeneous force which went to war – ten aeroplanes (hurriedly adorned with the Union Jack), six different models – ten private automobiles and a few London buses. It arrived on the Continent charged with controlling the skies within a 100-mile radius of Dunkirk.

The war on the ground was fluid. The Germans had been halted on the Marne and now Allies and Hun alike were trying to outflank each other as the Western Front extended its way northwards towards the Channel.

There was every likelihood the planes of the day would break down, crash land or come down far from their base. The pilots would need rescuing. Cars were the answer. Samson added armour plate 1/8in thick to his vehicles, mounted machine-guns... and gave birth to the armoured car.

Samson was not a man to be passive. Far from simply rescuing stranded pilots, his cars began to range around the Belgian and French countryside, hunting the Hun.

"Sometimes we were in villages at night where German patrols would be sleeping," one officer recalled. "When dawn came and they had just mounted their horses, we would appear round the corner and the Maxims would open out. The casualties we suffered were nothing compared to those inflicted on the enemy."

They were dubbed the Ocean-going Cavalry, the Motor Bandits and, ominously, the Suicide Brigade – the armour plate offered no protection against bullets fired at close-range, and what plate there was only went 3ft high anyway. The manufacturers, one officer lamented, "had given more consideration to the protection of the car than to the men who had to fight in them."

The Hun had nothing yet to counter Samson's roving bandits. The *Uhlans* – the fabled, and feared, German

cavalry – suffered particularly and No.1 Wing's billets at Hazebrouck, south of Dunkirk, quickly filled up with lances and helmets. Samson even acquired a German steed.

But aside from the trophies of war, there were also its horrors. "Saw the most sickening sights on the road – cars being hit and breaking up the occupants," Bernard Isaac observed outside Antwerp. Three weeks later near Ypres, he added: "Saw the effects of the most modern death-dealing guns and the horrible massacre wrought. Blood and death is soon got used to, but am puzzled to know what it all means. We must all be mad."

All this, as the British official historian conceded a decade later, had little to do with the war in the air. But it did demonstrate "the diversity of business" by the Royal Naval Air Service. "They were sailors and adventurers by tradition. Their courage put new heart into desperate men and their humanity – the greatest tradition of the British Navy – added lustre to their courage."

Wherever the armoured cars ranged in northern France and Belgium in the late summer of 1914, they put new heart into desperate men. In Bruges, in Cassel, and above all in Lille. When the Germans pulled out of the city, Samson's armoured cars moved in to 'liberate' it. Proclamations were posted. The people "cheered themselves hoarse" with cries of *Vive l'Angleterre!* French maidens wiped the dust off the dirty sailors' faces with damp sponges. "One felt rather as I imagined a Roman general used to feel on being given a triumph," Samson observed.

The triumph was temporary. Lille would spend most of the war under the jackboot – like a succession of towns and cities in north-west Europe as the autumn of 1914 turned to winter.

FIRST OF THE FEW CHANNEL SKIRMISHES

It was still the height of the English summer when 20-year-old Harold Roshier pitched up at the private aerodrome Brooklands in Surrey. Roshier had been a sickly child – he suffered acutely from bronchitis and asthma. He spent his formative years in the healthier climes of India and South Africa. But on the day war was declared, he applied for a commission in the RNAS then headed straight for Brooklands in Surrey to learn the art of flight with the grandly-titled British and Colonial Aeroplane Co.

There was little time for theory. Within a week, Roshier was airborne. The student sat at the front of the box-kite trainer, perched on the aircraft's 'nose' "with a clean drop below", no harness to hold him in. Behind sat his teacher – "an awfully nice fellow" – bawling instructions. "If you do so and so, you'll break your neck," he imparted.

Manuals provided the would-be aviator with equally useful tips. "There is an excellent rule to be remembered while flying: one is all right as long as the engine is going strong."

Within two weeks, Harold Roshier was flying solo. Within six, he had earned his pilot's certificate, then headed to Fort Grange in Gosport to learn the art of naval flying.

By the end of November he was on patrol off the Northumbrian coast, then it was to Dover to pummel the ports of Ostend and Zeebrugge.

The Belgian ports would become central to the Imperial Navy's U-boat campaign. They were already the centre of attention for Charles Samson and his naval aviators.

Four days before Christmas 1914, Samson climbed into a Maurice Farman Shorthorn 'pusher' – the propeller pushed rather than pulled the biplane through the skies at an impressive 66mph.

It took half an hour for the Shorthorn to climb to 6,000ft, following the Channel coast. Then, with the engine off, the biplane glided down 5,000ft, arriving over German coastal batteries at Ostend. Samson jinked and weaved through searchlights which probed the December sky, while the anti-aircraft guns blustered. Eighteen 16lb bombs fell from the Shorthorn, which now turned out to sea and then west. An hour or so later, the flier brought it down on the sands at Dunkirk – right outside the villa which was his quarters. Charles Samson was half frozen but he had conducted the first night-time bombing raid in history.

He and his men returned. Several times. The tit-for-tat of trench raids by the infantry was played out in the skies. Samson and his men bombed the Germans. The Germans bombed Samson and his men.

On the penultimate day of 1914, seven German aircraft 'visited' No.1 Wing at Malo-les-Bains, just east of Dunkirk. The men lined up on the field, two ranks deep.

"Samson goes up and tries to fight all seven," an astonished Bernard Isaac wrote. "He comes back unhurt." Now. No.1 Wing gave chase. Isaac climbed into a Farman with a comrade and headed for Ostend, armed with a rifle and three bombs.

"We have an awful time," he recorded. "The Germans have some new anti-aircraft guns. The shells burst so near that it is wonderful we were not cut to pieces." The weather was even more formidable than the flak.

"It was blowing a gale and coming back I was nearly thrown out of the machine," Isaac continued. "Got back safely. Hear ringing in my ears. Feel very deaf from engine, shell shock etc."

Harold Roshier faced his baptism of fire on Friday February 5 1915.

"All along the coast, the guns were firing, nasty vicious flares, and then a puff of smoke as the shrapnel burst," he wrote to his father. Ostend was "simply a mass of guns". Things were slightly better at Zeebrugge. Using the clouds as cover, Roshier swooped down, loosed his bombs and then "streaked out to sea".

Roshier's was one of 34 aircraft which struck at the Belgian ports that day. They would return ten days later in another "great raid", but the days of striking at the Channel ports were drawing to a close. The Admiralty had other plans for Samson's men.

A NEW THEATRE IN AFRICAN SKIES THE BEAST TAMED

Barely a dozen years after its birth, the youthful German Empire was fervently seizing places in the sun.

There was New Guinea, Samoa, the Bismarck Islands, the Marshalls in the Pacific. In China, the Germans seized Tsingtao.

But it was in Africa that Germany's overseas empire was greatest – Namibia, Togoland, Cameroon. And in the east of the 'dark continent', the prize – German East Africa, nearly one million square kilometres, nearly twice the size of the Motherland.

Like all empires, the German Reich needed military forces to safeguard its assets and a fleet to safeguard trade.

Just two months before the outbreak of war, the Imperial Navy's presence in East Africa had been bolstered by the arrival of *manowari na bomba tatu* – the man o'war with three tubes. History knows her better as the light cruiser Königsberg.

For the first six weeks of the war, Königsberg struck at commerce in the Indian Ocean, sinking a British collier and, worse, the obsolete cruiser – she'd been condemned a decade before – HMS Pegasus in Zanzibar harbour.

Flush with victory, Königsberg retired to her lair – the 100 square miles of the Rufiji Delta south of Dar es Salaam, its myriad of rivulets and its impenetrable mangrove forest. At the mouth of the delta, the Royal Navy began massing superior forces – but they could go no further for the river was too shallow.

And so the beast was trapped and its hunter sought a weapon which might penetrate its lair. It came in the form of two monitors – big guns, shallow draught – brought all the way from Britain.

And also brought all the way from the mother country was No. 4 RNAS Expeditionary Force, a grand title for a less-than-grand force: a handful of Short seaplanes – and a handful of men to operate them.

The planes set up base on the tiny island of Niororo, home to 30 natives who would gather around the contraptions, then jump back startled as the engine fired up and kicked up clouds of sand on the beach.

Unlike the locals, the fliers were unused to the heat. They paddled around in the water in minimum, if any clothing, tinkering away at the seaplanes.

By April 25 1915, the expeditionary force was ready. Cdr Eric Nanson headed out over the Rufiji, over the "dense growth of mangroves – a happy hunting ground for innumerable hippopotami, crocodiles and mosquitoes".

Nanson found the German cruiser hiding in the westernmost tributary of the river, smoke billowing from her three funnels, and marked her on his chart. As he passed over the cruiser volleys of rifle and shell fire buffeted his aircraft. He was soon out of range, only for German officers and native soldiers hiding in the



● Natives help the men of No. 4 RNAS Expeditionary Force bring an aircraft ashore off the Rufiji delta as the RN masses forces to sink the Königsberg

mangroves to open fire.

Nanson made it safely back to base, but the Shorts were no better suited to these climes than their crews: the seaplanes were underpowered, struggled in the heat, and the glue on their propellers simply would not stick.

Four new aircraft arrived from France and set up base on Mafia Island. They were soon joined by HM Ships Severn and Mersey, the monitors brought from the UK. Wireless transmitter were fitted to the aircraft so aircrew could report the fall of the monitors' shots.

Before first light on July 6, Severn and Mersey moved into the labyrinth of tributaries. Already in the sky was Lt Harold Watkins, carrying a handful of bombs.

Watkins watched as the monitors opened fire from a range of 10,000 yards – their shells fell a couple of hundred yards short.

And then Königsberg responded. "Her firing was magnificent," wrote Watkins. Severn and Mersey disappeared behind huge spouts of water. Mersey was hit, a turret put out of action and a flash fire raged which almost blew the vessel out of the water.

Between them, the two Expeditionary Force's aeroplanes had circled the German cruiser for 15 hours, all the time subjected to rifle and small arms fire. Given his vantage point, few people had a better overview of the fighting that day than Harold Watkins. In one word, July 6 had been "discouraging".

But not July 11. After trading blows for half an hour, the battle turned in the Britons' favour. In a seven-minute spell the German cruiser was hit repeatedly by the British guns.

Above, Lt John Cull reported the fall of the monitors' shells until the aircraft was rocked by shrapnel exploding in front of it. Königsberg had scored a lucky hit; it was her penultimate anti-aircraft shell.

Cull struggled to control his aircraft 2,500ft above the Rufiji. The engine stopped. The Henri Farman stuttered downwards. Cull set it down in the river next to Mersey. As she touched the water, she flipped over. The observer was thrown clear, but Cull was trapped upside down in the wreckage, finally freeing himself and swimming hurriedly for safety lest they be mauled by crocodiles or picked off by German snipers.

Cull's place in the skies was taken by Harold Watkins. He watched the unequal struggle as the Königsberg was turned into a twisted, tangled, blazing lump – caused in part by the British guns, in part by her crew scuttling her.

The attackers withdrew to Zanzibar for "great celebrations," wrote Harold Watkins. The victors, in their finest dress uniform, were invited to a reception by the sultan "and consumed large quantities of sherbet, ices, cigars and cigarettes." The naval airmen played tennis and golf, went riding and challenged the locals to a "great rugger match", lost 21-0 by the Britons, Watkins recalled – "the general festivities being our excuse."

THE TURKISH STUNT

THE HELL OF HELLES

The men in Zanzibar enjoyed a feeling of success, a feeling denied naval aviators elsewhere in the sun. In February 1915, Charles Samson and his men were called back from France. They were possessed by a "horrid thought" – that they might be relegated to training the next generation.

The Admiralty had other plans for them: it would send them east. It had already dispatched the seaplane carrier Ark Royal with the fleet attempting to force the Dardanelles. The attempt failed – spectacularly.

Only a full-scale invasion could open the strait and drive the Ottoman empire out of the war.

Six seaplanes – six woefully inadequate and ill-equipped seaplanes at that – were too few and the Army refused to relinquish a single aircraft from the Western Front.

And so it was that in late March, after a rough crossing of first the Channel and Bay of Biscay and then the Mediterranean, No.3 Squadron RNAS arrived on the tiny island of Tenedos, 18 miles from the 'toe' of the Dardanelles.

Eighteen aircraft, 18 officers, 102 men and one horse (Samson's *Uhlen* charger brought from France) made a clearing in a vineyard their home – the officers in a farmhouse, the men in tents and wooden shacks. They were plagued less by the Turks than by the dust and flies. The dust got on everything. The flies got on everything.

For the next month, the mixed bag of naval aircraft – seaplanes, landplanes, some British, some French – flew over the Dardanelles, spotting for the guns of the fleet, observing Turkish positions and photographing the peninsula.

All of which was rather too passive for Charles Samson, who decided to start bombing the enemy. "I felt it was time the Turks realised that Eastchurch had arrived on the scene," he nonchalantly observed.

Samson's bombing attacks were less than successful, his squadron's aerial reconnaissance rather more so. Sir Ian Hamilton, the expeditionary force's rather chipper commander, and his staff spent hours "trying to digest the honey brought back by our busy aeroplane bees". The general didn't entirely understand air power – "Flying is not my stunt," he confessed – but Charles Samson tried to persuade him of its potency.

With 40 pilots, 30 bomber-reconnaissance aircraft and two dozen fighters, the naval airman told the general, "he could take the peninsula by himself and save us all a vast lot of trouble". Except that he didn't have such an aerial armada. On the best of days, No.3 Squadron could muster no more than half a dozen serviceable aircraft.

And so the Allies would have to take the Dardanelles the hard way: by assault from the sea at dawn on Sunday April 25 1915.

Sent out to spot for the guns and report Turkish movements, Charles Samson watched one of the bloodiest disasters in British military history played out beneath him. Height offered the aviators a unique vantage point. "I saw hell let loose," he wrote. "The sea was literally whipped into a foam by the hail of bullets and shells," the water "absolutely red with blood, a horrible sight to see."

In his secure vantage point – there was no Turkish opposition in the skies – Charles Samson seethed. "It was an appalling sight for us to look at from our safe position in the air and made one think that we were not doing our bit."

With typical understatement, Samson had played down the work of naval aviators on April 25 1915. His men flew three sorties apiece that day, 2,400 miles in all in the Dardanelles skies.

The sea and lighters around the shores of Cape Helles were still full of dead bodies, the waters still red with blood the next morning – "Horrible sight, even at 3,000ft," Bernard Isaac noted in his diary.

"Never saw nor read of anything quite like this, not at Ypres, Lille and Antwerp."

But death and destruction at Gallipoli was not a one-sided affair. Five days after the landings, Isaac was airborne again with Charles Collet – a veteran of the raids on the Zeppelin sheds in the first weeks of war and the first man in the world to 'loop the loop' – carrying half a dozen 20lb and one 100lb bomb.



● 'Saw H5 burning in marshes. Picked up pilot'... Richard Bell Davies rescues his comrade Gilbert Smylie as Bulgarian troops close in; the deed earned the modest aviator the Royal Naval Air Service's second Victoria Cross

They dropped their 'eggs' on a Turkish camp 16 miles from the beachheads – ignoring the lively rifle fire – then took reconnaissance photographs. From 4,000ft, Isaac had "a magnificent view of the Dardanelles. All the ships were committing the quickest kind of destruction." Some shells crashed into the water, sending towering plumes hanging in the air. Others landed in the villages of Maidos and Krithia. "Whole rows of houses seemed to give way to them."

It went on like this day after day. A spot of bombing before breakfast. Some aerial reconnaissance and photography, plenty of spotting for the guns of the fleet, a few well-placed 100lb bombs dropped on Turkish positions followed by Germans dropping bombs on the RNAS airfield.

Pilots were always to carry a revolver or pistol, a notepad should always be fixed to the instrument panel for making observations. They were to study Jane's *The World's Fighting Ships* and memorise the outlines of the Turkish fleet.

Samson expected his men to be like himself: to the point. "Don't make wild statements," he told them. "A small accurate report is worth pages of rhetoric." But above all, he demanded professionalism. "Don't try to do what is termed by some people as 'stunt flying'." That, the commander decided, was conduct unbecoming an officer.

"We live in the air all day, giving them no rest with bombs," Samson enthused. "I honestly believe that our aeroplanes have given the Turks a healthy feeling of dread."

But the Dardanelles took its toll on man and machine. There were rarely more than half a dozen aircraft airworthy, while their crews grew increasingly exhausted, drained by the heat, illness and the exertions of battle.

By high summer, No.3 Wing was becoming a spent force. "The pilots and observers are all worn out from long, sustained and continuous effort without relief," an official report warned.

Charles Collet was one such worn-out pilot. Perhaps the finest aviator in the Service, he left the squadron's new airfield on the larger island of Imbros to deliver engine parts to a broken aircraft at Suvla Bay.

Barely had Collet left the field than his engine failed, the aircraft was caught by a gust and plunged to the ground. The observer was thrown clear, but not Collet. He was trapped in the burning wreckage. Ground crew rushed to pull him out. The aviator was so badly burned, his rescuers simply grabbed handfuls of flesh as they tried to drag him away from the blazing machine. And through it all, Charles Collet was conscious. "Put me out, put me out," he implored.

Half an hour later he was dead. He was laid to rest at Imbros alongside comrades from No.3 Squadron RNAS, some with simple wooden

crosses, others, like Collet's, with slightly more ornate ones.

Were their sacrifices in vain, the men of No.3 Squadron wondered. The senior British officer in theatre, Sir Ian Hamilton, complained "he had no reconnaissance – with the exception of what he could see from the top of a mast".

Bernard Isaac was livid. He and his comrades had flown more than 100,000 miles in hostile skies. And for what? "It would appear that a good deal of the work and expenditure was wasted," he fumed in his diary.

But not entirely. The Royal Naval Air Service *did* provide invaluable service – and if the brass didn't always appreciate its efforts, the ordinary soldiers did. They cheered when the gallant airmen shot down the Hun or when they sent bombs hurtling into Turkish trenches. "One of our aeroplanes bombed Turk's trench," one Australian commander thanked Samson. "Bits of Turk seen in the air, remainder of occupants got on to parapet where we killed a lot with machine-guns. Please repeat bombing." The attack, Samson later conceded, had been a lucky hit. But he wasn't going to admit it publicly. "No.3 lived on this reputation for accuracy for a long time..."

His squadron provided its greatest service on May 18 – without firing a shot. Airmen spied Turkish troops massing for an all-out assault on the Australians and New Zealanders at Anzac Cove. Forewarned is forearmed. The Turkish attack the following day was cut down bloodily. Thirteen thousand Turks were wounded, 3,000 lay dead on the battlefield. "There is," the official British historian wrote, "no better example of the far-reaching effect of a simple and timely piece of observation from the air."

And there were less bloody victories. At dawn on August 12, Flt Cdr Charles Edmonds climbed into a Short Seaplane off Xeros Island and headed east over the isthmus linking the peninsula with the Turkish mainland. There, where the waters of the Dardanelles widen to become the Sea of Marmara he spied a dozen sailing vessels, a tug hauling two large barges and a steamer.

Edmonds dropped down to a mere 14ft above the waves and bore down on the steamer. There were brief flashes of light on the tug – rifle fire – but the Short continued undaunted. Just 300ft from his target, Edmonds released his weapon: a 14in Mk10 torpedo. He followed its track until it struck the steamer amidships, sending a tower of water and large fragments of wood and steel spinning through the air. Thus did the world's first aerial torpedo attack succeed.

As it turned out, the steamer was already beached, probably after being attacked by a British submarine prowling the Marmara. But the aerial attack was no fluke; five days later Edmonds sank a supply ship, his comrade dispatched a tug. The seeds of Taranto, Pearl Harbor, the Bismarck chase, had been sown.



A FRESH OPPONENT

A FEAT OF AIRManship

Shipping in the Sea of Marmara was not the only new target presented to naval aviators in the waning months of 1915. When Bulgaria entered the war in October, a glittering array of prizes lit up along the northern shores of the Aegean – just within striking distance of the aircraft at Imbros.

No target was more enticing than the Berlin-Constantinople railway line – a vital artery linking the two Central Powers. Barely 45 miles from Imbros, the line crossed the Maritza river delta, near the important junction of Ferrijik.

In November 1915, both came under repeated attack from pairs of naval bombers – the bridge nine times, the rail junction five with reasonable, rather than spectacular result. On the 19th of the month, Richard Bell Davies (pictured above) and Gilbert Formby Smylie headed for Ferrijik – Davies in a Henri Farman, Davies in a single-seat Nieuport Scout fighter-bomber.

As he approached the rail yard, Smylie ran a gauntlet of Bulgarian anti-aircraft fire – it now had a nickname, 'Archie' – which crippled his engine. He released all but one of his bombs as planned, then brought his stricken Nieuport down in the Maritza delta marshes. Smylie torched his Farman, blew up the remaining bomb by firing his pistol at it and began to walk towards the nearby Turkish border.

All this was observed by Richard Bell Davies, who then took action – as he reported to Samson on his return. "Saw H5 burning in marshes. Picked up pilot."

It was typical of Bell Davies' understatement. He neglected to mention that a group of Bulgarian soldiers were closing in as he picked up his comrade, who somehow squeezed into the single-seat cockpit. With the enemy about to pounce on the Nieuport, the tiny aircraft took off low over the marshes and headed for Imbros. It was "a feat of airmanship that can seldom have been equalled for skill and gallantry". Thus were the words of Bell Davies' citation for the Victoria Cross.

FOKKER SCOURGE

TOO LITTLE REWARD

Richard Bell Davies' skill and gallantry were in vain. By the time of his feat of airmanship, war minister Kitchener had already pulled the plug on the Gallipoli misadventure, ordering the Dardanelles evacuated. The naval aviators would go home too, but not before they had shielded the evacuation from prying enemy eyes.

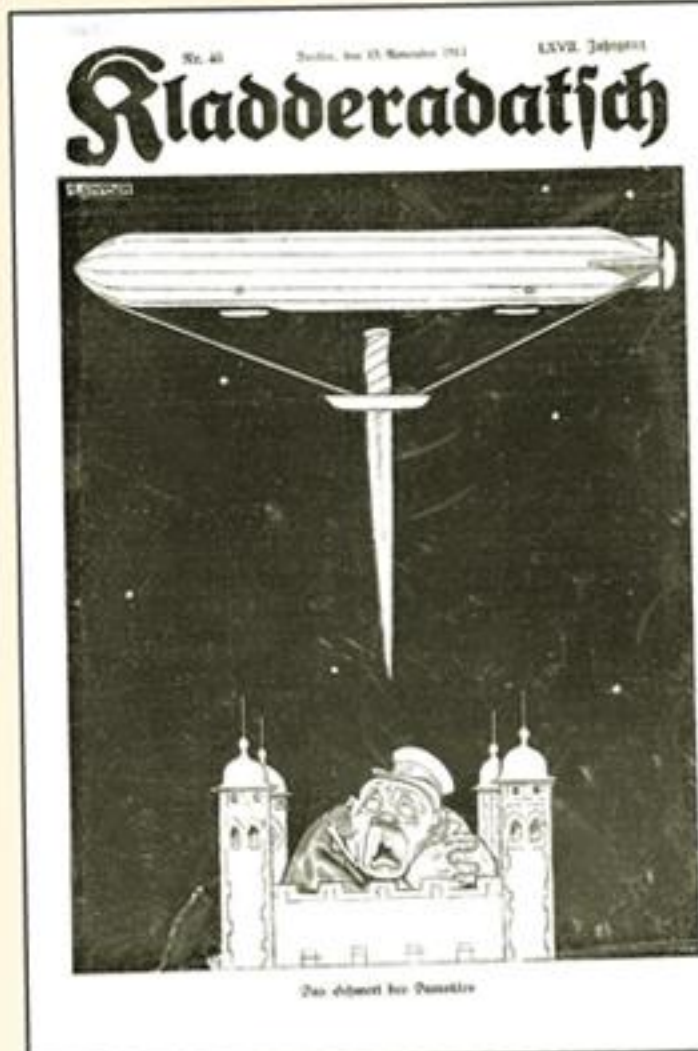
As 1915 waned, Samson's men – now bolstered by the arrival of a second squadron – were no longer masters of the skies. The Germans had sent their latest aircraft, the Fokker Eindecker, to Turkey. The Eindecker – monoplane – was unrivalled in the skies of France and Belgium in 1915. The RNAS had nothing to match it in the Dardanelles either.

Certainly the Voisin 'pusher' – so called because the propeller sat at the back of the fuselage, pushing the biplane along – was completely outperformed by the Eindecker, as Lt Donald Bremner discovered when a Fokker pounced on him from behind. The Voisin's sole machine-gun faced forward – and there was no way Bremner could bring the slower, less-maneuvrable biplane round to attack his foe. There were several bursts of fire from behind, the Voisin's engine stuttered and the aircraft began to fall rapidly.

"I cleared the front-line trenches by about six feet and just popped down on the aerodrome," Bremner recalled. The flier suggested scuttling the downed bird, but the soldiers said no – they didn't want fires to suggest to the Turks they were evacuating and blowing up the dumps. The Voisin was left and Donald Bremner sat on the beach for six hours until he boarded the steamer SS Partridge in the small hours of January 9 1916. It was the penultimate ship to leave the peninsula.

The campaign had cost the Allies 140,000 casualties, the Turks a quarter of a million. The latter celebrated a great victory over the combined forces of France and the British Empire. The RNAS left the Dardanelles not merely with the hollow feeling of defeat, but a bitter feeling that too few of their deeds in Turkish skies had been acknowledged. There was, of course, Bell Davies' VC, a smattering of DSCs, but generally No.3 Squadron returned home, its commander lamented, "not overburdened with decorations." Its men had clocked up more than 2,600 hours on sorties. "They got all the kicks," Samson fumed, "and none of the plums."

History would pass a fairer judgment on the naval aviators of the Dardanelles. "The Gallipoli adventure has a unique place in the history of the war," official chronicler Herbert Jones wrote. "Never again in the war were seaplanes compelled to work so much over the land, nor aeroplanes so much over the sea."



A HYMN OF HATE

LEVIATHANS OF THE SKY

GOTT STRAFE ENGLAND

There was a new refrain in the playgrounds – and the streets – of the Reich in the autumn and winter of 1914-15. Germans would greet their fellow country folk not with the traditional *Guten Morgen*, but a new refrain: *Gott strafe England* – God punish England. (A fellow *Englandhasser* – hater of England – would nod approvingly: *Er strafe es. He'll punish 'em.*)

The phrase came from the poisoned pen of one Ernst Lissauer. Few men whipped up more hatred against England – always *England*, never *Gross Britannien* – a dramatist and composer of doggerel. His Anglophobia reached its apotheosis with the *Hassgesang gegen England* – the ‘song of hate against England’, or simply ‘the hymn of hate’, three verses of bile and vitriol which reached its coda thus:

*Dich werden wir hassen mit
langem Haß,
Haß zu Wasser und Haß zu
Land,
Haß des Hauptes und Haß der
Hand,
Haß der Hämmer und Haß der
Kronen,
Drosselnder Haß von siebzig
Millionen,
Sie lieben vereint, sie hassen
vereint,
Sie alle haben nur einen Feind:
England!*



● *The Zeppelin menace... Reginald 'Rex' Warneford (pictured below left) destroys LZ39 over Belgium in June 1915, earning the first Victoria Cross for Naval aviation and (above left) the satirical magazine Kladderadatsch – a German counterpart to Punch – depicts the English Lion cowering in the Tower of London as the Sword of Damocles hangs from a Zeppelin*

(You we will hate with enduring
hatred
Hatred on the water, hatred on
the land
Hatred of the head and hatred
of the hand
Hatred of the hammer and
hatred of the Crown
The throttling hatred of 70
million people
Who love as one and hate as
one
Who all have a single foe:
England!)

And now, thanks to the lights
of perverted science, Ernst Lissauer
could add a new domain in which to
hate England – *Luft*, the air.

There was one weapon which
would wage war in this new domain
above all else, the *Luftschiff* – airship
– better known by the name of its
inventor, Zeppelin.

The bomber of 1914 could carry
a 20lb, a 50lb, perhaps even a 100lb
bomb a little over 100 miles. The
Zeppelin could carry more than
1,000lbs of high explosives and
incendiaries on round trips of 600
miles or more. In the opening months
of the Great War, there was little else
which could *strafe* England.

There was every fear that these
hydrogen-filled leviathans would
rain death and destruction down
from English skies. They had
bombed Liège and Antwerp.

England awaited attack – a
blackout was imposed upon
towns and cities in the
autumn of 1914. And
Germany *expected* them
to attack, as the country's
schoolchildren sang:

*Zeppelin, flieg,
Hilf uns im Krieg,
Fliege nach England,
England wird abgebrannt,
Zeppelin, flieg!
(Fly Zeppelin
Help us in this war,
Fly to England,
England will be burned to the
ground,
Fly Zeppelin!)*

Yet for all the doggerel, all
the hatred, all the rhetoric, the
Zeppelins weren't strafing England
in the autumn of 1914. The Kaiser had
misgivings about flattening London,
killing civilians, destroying cultural,
historical monuments. Finally, ten
days into the new year, Wilhelm II
relented. The leviathans could be
unleashed, as long, he stressed, as
landmarks and private property were
spared.

Which was easier said than done,
as the first Zeppelin raiders found
on Tuesday January 19 1915 as they
headed across the North Sea to raid
docks on the Thames and Humber.
Only two airships found England.
None found the Humber – or docks
for that matter. They did find King's
Lynn and Great Yarmouth and sent
their two dozen bombs tumbling
down accordingly. Despite the
Kaiser's insistence, private property
was damaged, and civilians were
killed – four, plus 16 injured.

To the British public, it was
yet another example of German
Schrecklichkeit – frightfulness – and
rather flew in the face of Winston
Churchill's promise that the mother
country would be safeguarded by a
“swarm of very formidable hornets”.

There were very few Royal Naval
Air Service hornets scattered at a half
a dozen airfields around the South
East, bolstered by Army anti-aircraft
gunners defending the ports and
naval gunners defending the capital.

Despite Churchill's pre-war
gusto, the beginnings were all rather
lacklustre and amateurish, as S/Lt
Eric Beaman found when he set his
Caudon biplane down at Hendon, the
airfield earmarked for the capital's
defence.

“Now you are the air defence
of London,” a cheerful chap at the
Admiralty told him. “The only one.”

Beaman protested he had no
weapon, no observer, no ground crew.
The official shrugged his shoulders.
“I've leave that to you.”

Luckily for London, the Zeppelins
had not yet attacked the city.
They struck at ‘Newcastle and the
shipyards of the Tyne’ – actually
Blyth and surrounding mining
villages – ‘a town on the Humber’
– actually Lowestoft – and towns in
East Anglia and Kent – Southend,
Bury St Edmunds, Ramsgate.

But on the night of May 31, LZ –
Luftschiff – Zeppelin 38 flew up the
Thames estuary and rained more than
100 high-explosive and incendiary
bombs down upon the streets of
London. There were seven more
victims of German *Schrecklichkeit*
that night and £18,500 damage
caused – roughly £1m today – and the
Fatherland rejoiced that the heart of
the “huckster nation has been sown
with bombs”.

Each time the sirens wailed,
the aircraft of the Royal Naval Air
Service were scrambled. But chasing
Zeppelins served no purpose other
than to reassure the terrified public.
“You had about as much chance of
spotting a black cat in the Albert
Hall in the dark,” Lt Graham Donald
observed. To Humphrey Leigh, the
efforts to stop the Zeppelin menace
were worse than futile, they were
plain murder. Aircraft were sent up
at night armed with just a rifle against
leviathans more than 500ft long. Up
they went – but there was no training
in night flying and, more importantly,
no training in night landing. The
planes invariably crashed – invariably
with fatal consequences for their
crew. “The orders to go up had come
from the Admiralty,” fumed Leigh.
“A lot of people in the Admiralty
didn't know what an aeroplane could
and could not do. It was a complete
waste of an aircraft and manpower.”

Finding the foe was hard enough,
catching him even more difficult. It
took the Navy's principal interceptor
of the day, the Avro 504, seven
minutes to reach 3,500ft. Rifle and
machine-gun fire seemed to do
little more than wound these Hun
leviathans. Official orders suggested
using grenades, or even ramming

the airships. Only dropping bombs –
from above the Zeppelin – seemed to
offer any prospect of success.

Ten thousand feet above Ostend
in the small hours of May 17 1915,
Flt Cdr Arthur Wellesley Bigsworth
– named for the Duke of Wellington
– managed to climb above LZ39.
He dropped four 20lb bombs on the
Zeppelin's envelope. Five hydrogen
gas bags exploded, but LZ39 did not
die. She limped back to base.

Earlier that same morning, Flt S/Lt
Reginald ‘Rex’ Warneford had tried
to halt LZ39's progress, pouring rifle
and machine-gun fire into the belly
of the beast – “without any noticeable
effect”, the Germans observed. The
world would take notice of Rex
Warneford's next attack.

THE FIRST VC

COURAGE, INTIATIVE INTREPIDITY

Unable to stop the ‘Zeppelin menace’
in the skies it seemed, perhaps
attacking the great hulks in their
sheds might prove more fruitful. On
the night of June 6-7, four naval
aviators were sent aloft to either
intercept the airships – returning
from another raid on London – or,
more likely, to destroy them in their
sheds outside Brussels.

Flt Lts John Wilson, a former
county cricketer and future Grand
National winner, and John Mills
arrived over the sheds, released their
bombs amid a flurry of ‘Archie’
and escaped in the June mist as the
Belgian sky was lit by the glow of
flames. LZ38 – and the shed – were
no more.

At about the same time, Rex
Warneford spied the grey outline
of LZ37 returning to its base after an
abortive attack on London.

The airship opened fire and
Warneford in his Morane Saulnier
monoplane pulled out of range
initially. For the next 20 or so minutes,
the aircraft climbed to 11,000ft, then
with the engine off, descended on top
of the Zeppelin.

“When close above him, I dropped
my bombs and, while releasing the
last, there was an explosion which
lifted my machine and turned it
over,” the RNAS officer wrote in an
official report.

“The aircraft was out of control
for a short period, but went into
a nose dive and the control was
regained.”

Aboard the zeppelin, coxswain
Alfred Muhler felt the craft shudder,
then the huge envelope – the airship's
‘skin’ – began to collapse as flames
engulfed it.

“The scorching heat increased and
increased and our clothes burst into
flames,” he recalled. “The gondola
began to tilt and rock until, with
a terrible sound of breaking wood
and metal, it tore away and plunged
towards the ground.”

LZ37 plummeted some 8,000ft;
its wreckage landed on a convent
in Ghent, killing two nuns. Alfred
Muhler woke up in hospital. He was
the sole survivor of LZ37's crew.

It was an incident the Germans
would rather the world did not learn
about. They sealed off the convent
and surrounding streets, forbade the
folk of Ghent to leave their homes,
snatched a camera from a sister who
tried to record the damage to her
place of worship, and spent the next
two weeks removing the charred,
twisted, scorched remains of the
Zeppelin. And it was all in vain,
for by then the world knew that
these monsters of the skies could be
downed.

Rex Warneford had also been on
Belgian soil that night – temporarily.
He set his crippled aircraft down
behind enemy lines – where German
cavalry were now swarming to find
him – and carried out makeshift
repairs, enough to carry his
monoplane back to friendly territory,
then filed a rather understated report
of his actions.

Within a day, George V decided
the airman's act was worthy of the
Victoria Cross – the first awarded to
the Royal Naval Air Service.

Warneford was not surprisingly
feted at home and abroad in the wake
of his success. He was invited to Paris
to receive the *Croix de Guerre* and the
Légion d'Honneur. He was ‘billeted’
at the Ritz. “It was handshakes,
flowers, autograph hunters, gorgeous
girls and champagne,” Rex's friend
and fellow flier Michael Marsden
wrote.

Crowds accompanied the VC
winner wherever he went – as did
journalists. On June 16, Rex was
guest of honour at a dinner in a
Parisian restaurant. “The young hero,
rising to his feet, in a loud voice
cried: ‘Vive la France! Vivent les
Alliés! et à bas la Boche!’ and sat
down blushing with embarrassment,”
one newspaper wrote.

The next day the young officer
was killed, thrown out of a Henri
Farman F27 at 700ft during a test
flight near the French capital. “He
who defied the storm,” the *Paris
Soir* wrote lyrically, “has been killed
by a breeze.”

Rex Warneford's funeral was
almost a state affair. He was laid to
rest with full pomp and ceremony
at Brompton Cemetery in West
London. Rex was in good company
at Brompton – there were already
two VC winners interred there. A
cordon of police, soldiers and sailors
had to hold back the throng eager
for a glimpse of his grave. In time,
the readers of the *Daily Express*
would erect an imposing monument,
featuring a relief of a Zeppelin
venting huge clouds of smoke and
fire, a solitary aircraft rising high
above it. And in time, the memorial
would fade, its façade scarred by a
century of exposure to the elements.
Warneford's slightly faint face
still smiles, but the words beneath
it remain imperious: courage,
initiative, intrepidity.

They stand not merely as an
epitaph for Rex Warneford but for
all the pioneering naval aviator who
sought to shake off the surly bonds
of Earth.



AS THE image on the front page shows, in the early days the men of the Royal Naval Air Service were a fairly amorphous bunch – especially in the skies.

From the outset, the new
branch was distinguished from the
regular Senior Service – by its
uniforms, by its ranks, by its
songs, by its language.

Officer pilots wore a small eagle
brooch to denote their status – as
well as an eagle insignia above
the loop on their sleeve rank.
Rating pilots also wore eagles but
with a steering wheel or ship's
wheel denoting aircraft or airship
service, while badges such as
propellers, crossed axes and a
simple ‘W.T.’ denoted some the
many trades.

Ranks were different too:
Flight Sub-Lieutenant (acting
Sub-Lieutenant), Flight
Lieutenant (Sub-Lieutenant),
Flight Commander (Lieutenant),
Squadron Commander
(Lieutenant Commander) and
Wing Commander (Commander).

On the ground the men wore
monkey jackets over a flannel
shirt, breeches, puttees and boots.
For sorties, they would don a
fur-lined leather coat, fur-lined
helmets. Gloves were a must.
Any exposed flesh was smothered
with Vaseline, whale oil or
engine grease. Even with all this
protection, aircrew were never
warm. Sweat and urine would
freeze. Touching metal with bare
hands guaranteed frostbite or
blisters.

Not until the final months of the
war did aircrew have parachutes –
Whitehall determined that ‘chutes
would encourage fliers to jump
rather than nurse their stricken
aircraft home.

COMING SOON

In the second and final instalment,
coming in our October edition:
Battlebags and U-boats; Naval Eight
over the Western Front; Birth of the
Carrier; End of the RNAS.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Compiled by Richard Hargreaves.
With thanks especially to naval
aviation historian Alan Key,
Catherine Rounsfell and the staff
of the Fleet Air Arm Museum for
providing most of the images, the
Department of Documents at the
Imperial War Museum, and military
historian Michael Forsyth for help
with Charles Samson's career.

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